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RAM

JOHNNYS
Guest Singles Review

TIM & DEBBIE

BRAINSPEAK CLOSEUP

Plus
BUS: SON OF TRAM
Terror Timetable!

MOVING PICTURES • HALL AND OATES •
STRANGE TENANTS • BOX OF FISH • QED •
SCRIBBLE • MUZAK — The Gentle Tentacle

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YAY TRIPLE JAY FOR 21 YEARS!

What a programme! What a radio station! What a mindfuck! I just gotta tell you and the world that '21 Years In 21 Days' was some of the best use of radio I've ever heard. Not only did it give lots of amazing jolts to the memory, but the selection — particularly from the music of the early 60s to the early 70s — turned me on to a few things I missed entirely in those golden years.
Yours from the time warp,
J. Peel, Alexandria.
We gotta admit: the bits we heard were amazing, not to mention truly excellent. Yours from pp.16-17.

COUPE DE TRIFFIDS

Re: Stuart Coupe's article RAM Jan. 5, 1984 #226. The Triffids Just Another (Great) Casual Tragedy — it seems to me that the casual tragedy is not the Triffids so much as Coupe's attitude to them: posturing as world-weary Journo — chronicling yet another independent band's inability to make it to the big league.

We are faced with Coupe's own casual lack of perception and inconsistent approach to the issue of independent music in this country. The Triffids in their own words (quoted in Coupe's article) have chosen to work slowly at their music and thoughtfully at the structure of their career. The attitude they exhibit, while self-effacing — is hardly the 'we'll blunder through some how, the whole thing is just an accident' that Coupe invests them with. The *Treeless Plain* album gives all indication of an intelligent, resourceful band concerned with the delivery of a consummate product, which is an expression of themselves, uncomprising in its aesthetic respresentation of them as a group and as industry commodity.

Coupe's judgemental attitude sits between two fences and unsuccessfully on either. He acknowledges the band as "independent" and "grassroots" without validating their obvious success in this area. At the same time he pays lip-service to the quality of their present and past material in order to denounce their organisational abilities, their lack of (what, commercial?) success and somebody's (his own?) rock and roll dream. So what if Robert McComb works as a cleaner — at least his dream is evident and tangible through a finely honed and well realised recording.

The problem is not the Triffids and their slow but consistent progress towards the realisation of an aesthetic objective through the independent scene, but Coupe's own arbitary standards of assessment and journalism, wherein an independent band is derided for seemingly not achieving (what can only be presumed to be) the fruits of the legitimate, commercial industry. And at the same time using this band as a vehicle for a tired and rather world-weary piece from the pen of the ditto rock-journo persona.

The Triffids, as Coupe acknowledges, produce good music — and such musical achievement is hardly "accidental" as any rock journalist with a knowledge of the mechanics of the industry should know. What a shame that Coupe's tongue-in-*chic* put down of such a hard-working band constitutes the best example of all that is wrong with rock journalism in this country — and elsewhere for that matter.
Katie McPherson,
Woolloomooloo.

There's nothing world-weary about Coupe that a couple of litres of Victorian Bitter wouldn't fix. . . His intention (insofar as Coupe can be said to have one) was not a put-down, nor was his appreciation (ditto) of the record lip service; rather, an "isn't it amazing that such quality services such adversity." (— The Committee To Save Stuart From Himself).

DIVINYLS DE COUPE

Having paid about fifteen dollars for the very glossy coffee table OK The New Rock 'N' Roll by the no doubt new car owners Glenn A.(?) Baker and S. Coupe, I admit I was interested in getting my money's worth via the contents. But first I noticed the cover and there was the mouth and mike of Christina Amphlett; so turn to D for Divinyls.

If the outline on that band is an example of press releases, they don't say so. If it is an example of the book's depth and accuracy, bassist Jeremy Paul has "such a credit" as having been in a mainstream group. In fact Mark McEntee was Air Supply's original guitarist and later for such luminaries as Malcolm McCallum and Marcia Hines, and Amphlett's credits include peculiarly mainstream activities such as stage plays: "Let My People Come"? "Superstar", oh, as well as the 2CH vocal choir.

Now if credits such as those aren't worth mention and I'm only up to D in the A-z of Rock in the 80's what hope have be investors of finding out "the real story". Rather than re-cycle bullshit, Australia's "Top Rock Writers" (as they thoughtfully let us know on the cover of their book) should get it right or get Phil Stafford to give them a hand.
The original Divinyls Fan,
Sydney.
Despite the brain-damaged syntax and tenuous grasp of logic, we get your drift. . .

SCHOLARLY DURAN DEFENSIVE

Usually when I read a bad review of a good band, I just ignore it. However, Frank Brunetti's review of Duran Duran's "Seven and The Ragged Tiger" was such utter garbage, I feel compelled to make at least a 'token protest'.

Maybe I'm behind the times, but aren't album reviews supposed to be about the tracks on the album? Mr Brunetti spent the opening paragraphs going on and on about the Monkees, James Freud (God help us), Haysi Fantayzee and Culture Club. He then launched into a nostalgic trip amongst the band's early material, saying he thought it superior to their latest releases. As John Taylor (the band's bassist) said himself, "We didn't want to make an album of Planet Earth, or anything, we wanted to try and develop the sound a bit". It's a strange business when a band gets slagged off for progressing and cops the same treatment for remaining too similar.

And *still* nothing about the new album. Instead, pathetic remarks concerning the way the band spend their money. Apart from being none of his, or our, business, it was all rubbish. (Although, having read this much of the review, rubbish was all I expected).

At last, something about the record (an *amazing* three paragraphs). Of the nine tracks on the album, two are mentioned. One, "Union of The Snake", is a single. Why bother reviewing the L.P. if you're not going to tell anyone about what's on it? Mr Brunetti said the production by Alex Sadkin hastened D.D.'s decline. A "less clinical, more earthy sound". If chart positions are any indication, this new sound is *more* appealing. "Is There Something I Should Know?" was the band's first U.K. No. 1, reaching No. 4 in Australia. "Union Of The Snake" was their first U.S. No. 1 and again, reached No. 4 in Australia, (bettering anything done by their apparently superior early material, except "Planet Earth" in Australia).

The actual L.P. has been No. 1 in both U.K. and Australia, according to your *own* magazine. The band are satisfied with it, both personally and financially, and a lot of the public like it, however, the critics don't.

As to remarks that their lyrics are meaningless, I'll leave that to Nick Rhodes (the synth player) to explain: "I think our new music says a lot of things, but it's open to many interpretations and I like that. The songs all do have specific meaning to us, but I'm sure there are hundreds of interpretations of "Union of The Snake", so the fact that the lyric is based on the writings of Cundolini needn't matter to anyone." (And taking that line, I'd say five tracks weren't even about women — as sex objects or bitches).

Still, the review might have been atrocious, but Simon Le Bon (vocalist) summed it up when he said "You get to a stage when you don't care what the critics say, 'cause they can come up with such a load of old balderdash anyway". Amen.
Fiona Howe, Westleigh NSW.
Have you ever noticed how not every restaurant review gives you the recipes?

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Wed 22nd Mitchell College — Bathurst
Thur 23rd Cabbage Tree Hotel — Wollongong
Fri 24th Cronulla Workers Club (early); Cabramatta Stardust Hotel (late)
Sat 25th Selinas
Sun 26th Chevron (special guests New Christs)
Tue 28th Coffs Harbour
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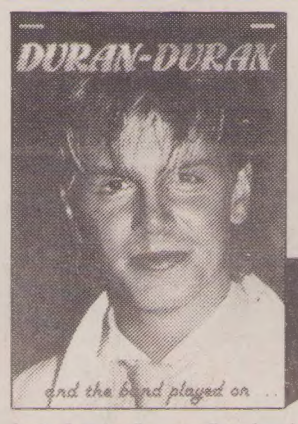

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Transit Lounge

PEOPLE. EVENTS. THINGS ON THE MOVE

ONE MORE TIME (WITH FEELING)

Bill Putt and Mike Rudd demonstrate early 70s enthusiasm

Joe Camilleri, circa 1977 — the sharpest!

SPECTRUM TO REFORM

May Grow Into An ARIEL

'I'll Be Gone'. . . but I'll be back! SPECTRUM, that legend from the dawn of time (i.e. the beginning of the 70s) are getting back together. At press time, founder frontman MIKE RUDD was still finalising the lineup — ("Mark Kennedy can't do it and I can't find Ray Arnott!") — but he hopes to have something like the original quartet (with ever constant bass playing companion BILL PUTT, natch) on the road by mid February.

Spectrum (and their later mirror-image dance incarnation, Murtceps) were big news with their No. 1 single, *I'll Be Gone,* in 1971. The band eventually metamorphosed into Ariel, then a whole series of less celebrated bands including Instant Replay, the Heaters, and more recently, W.H.Y. This last, involving much progressive hi-tech video presentation and European recording trips, proved something of a financial strain, and Rudd is candid about the motivation for the Spectrum reunion.

"It was the bills that suggested it to me, actually — it's not just purely nostalgia, and there's every chance that if it's moderately successful we'll follow it up with an even bigger and better. . . *spectacular,* featuring Spectrum *and* Ariel."

Some of today's audience would have been in bassinets when Spectrum was happening: what reaction does Rudd expect from people who've never heard, or certainly never seen the original?

"I haven't the faintest idea. . . But looking at Chain, who are back together on the road right now — they've been getting massive attendances and reactions, and certainly some of those people never saw the band then. Some of them probably weren't even *born*. . ."

Rudd is uncertain about the future of more progressive enterprises like W.H.Y. ("I don't think it will be appearing live for some considerable time, unless it's in response to some kind of demand — like people buying records!").

He's philosophic about the revival cycle: "Everybody's doing it, which shows a severe lack of imagination. But on the other hand, it *is* an era with very few real heroes anymore: you may as well have boring *old* farts as boring *young* farts."

JO JO ZEP & THE FALCONS

— One-Off March Reunion

The classic Falcons — JOE CAMILLERI, WILBUR WILDE, TONY FAEHSE, JEFF BURSTIN, JOHN POWER and GARY YOUNG — are reforming for a month-long national tour in March. The band last played together in mid-'81: "We just thought it would be fun," says Camilleri. "The original Falcons was very much a pub, r'n'b thing and that's what we'll be doing.

"It could be a long show — I'm going to have to get fit for this one." Since coming off the road with the Mk. III Jo Jo Zep, a radical adventure with two percussionists, backing tapes and dancing singers, Joe's been working out with a sideline enterprise called the Black Sorrows — "It's sort of cafe-rock — rhythm section plus sax, violin and piano accordian."

He hopes to release a Black Sorrows record on his own Mighty Records label shortly; the next month promises a smorgasbord of Camilleri vinyl, with the compilation album *Sound Of Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons* selling steadily since Christmas, and a special live version of *Hit And Run* recorded with the Tim Finn band late last year.

"I'm hoping that this month will be a real party affair. We never actually had a proper farewell. . ."

SHERBS Farewell Tour

'Tonight May Last Forever' is the new single, but not so its authors. After nearly fifteen years, two name changes and many highs and lows, the SHERBS are officially calling it quits. The writing has been on the wall for six months, as various members began to pursue outside interests. A farewell tour starts on February 10 in Adelaide, and will reunite such scattered former members as CLIVE SHAKESPEARE and HARVEY JAMES.

WHO WANTS TO BE IN A MOVIE?

Oz Band May Score Key Role

IT'S not often a band manager gets to be the central character in a rock'n'roll film . . . but **Kit Lambert** — late manager of the Who — was no ordinary manager.

Pete Townshend has already gone on record as saying the Who owed their success to the manipulative skills of Lambert. So will a film based on his life. . . Production of *The Manager,* with English actor **Hywel Bennett** in the title role, gets under way mid-year in London, with subsequent locations in Venice and New York.

Producer **Jon Lindsay,** a former employee of Lambert, arrived in Sydney last month to continue his search for a band to appear in the film. But he's quick to stress that Who clones are definitely not required — the band ultimately chosen will not be appearing as the famous quartet. They should simply be capable of delivering "the same raw energy" that characterised the early Who — which leaves the field wide open.

The only role approximating a Who member will be that of Keith Moon, a difficult casting job in itself. The Who in fact will appear in the form of documentary footage, but most of the action will centre on the life, high times and ignominious death of Lambert.

The son of respected British classical/avant-garde composer Constant Lambert, Kit Lambert first rose to prominence as the sole survivor of an abortive Amazon expedition. He returned to Britain a hero after single-handedly fighting off a horde of savage Indian headhunters. After the kudos died down, he worked for the BBC for a time — following which he embarked on the task of (ironically enough) finding a band for a rock film. It turned out to be the Who.

Jon Lindsay's search for a band has led him a little further afield. . . He's already scoured the U.K., and has had the predictable responses.

"Someone actually wrote to me and said they looked like Pete Townshend, and had a mate who looked like Roger Daltrey." He grimaces at the memory. "Others kept sending me demos of Who songs."

The band eventually chosen will be flown to England, offered a recording contract (if not already signed), and will have the opportunity to record three songs for the film soundtrack.

The quest continues. . . Lindsay will be in Sydney till mid-February, and may be contacted through Music Television Ltd., phone (02) 358 6494.

TOURS TOURS TOURS

The SHADOWS, the band that launched a thousand electric guitar careers, are touching down this month during their 25th Anniversary World Tour.

Classical rockers SKY return in March (minus guitarist John Williamson), but with two new members — Ron Asprey, formerly of Backdoor and the Alan Parsons Project, and Lee Fothergill.

The Shadows and young Cliff, way back when. . .

Transit Lounge

PEOPLE. EVENTS. THINGS ON THE MOVE

THAT'S OLD CLASH HANDS PAUL SIMENON & JOE STRUMMER FLANKING THE NEW BOYS, L-R: PETE HOWARD (WHO'S DRUMMED ON & OFF FOR THE LAST NINE MONTHS); AND NEW GUITAR DUO VINCE WHITE & NICK SHEPPARD . . . THE GAP'S FOR MICK JONES, WHO'S DEFINITELY OUT OF THE BAND.

London 'House Of Horrors' mega-murderer Donald Nilsen has cited the music of New York avant gardener **Laurie Anderson** and medieval stretch-rack **Rick Wakeman** as the padding in his mental cell. Their repetitive, monotonal rhythms had a "trancelike, hypnotic" effect on him, apparently inspiring fresh themes on obstructive plumbing. . . An open and clogged case, m'lud.

Someone had to do it . . . **Virgin Films** threaten an adaption of man **George Orwell's** well-known short story, *This Year*, with none other than **Boy George** in the (plum?) role of Branston Smith. **Phil Oakey** is grooming himself for his role as Julia. **David Sylvian** threatens to play O'Brian, and **Ruichi Sakamoto** the Thing In Room 101. With music from the unlikely double act of Phil Collins and Cabaret Voltaire, *you* wouldn't want to go in their either . . .

Bow Wow Wow are set to re-emerge with a new name after sacking singer Annabella Lu Win last September. The **Chiefs Of Relief** include original Bow Wows Matthew Ashman, Dave La Barbarossa and Lee Gorman, plus new member Duncan Grey on keyboards. Meanwhile Annabella is in the studio recording her debut solo album with RCA. . .

Ian Dury's new band the **Music Students** are featured on his first album for two years due out next month. Its title? *4,000 Weeks' Holiday*. . .

Following his merciless sweep through the Antipodes last year, **David Bowie** rests while the film offers flood in. First in line is a major role in the next James Bond movie, *From A View To Kill*, to be directed by Albert Broccoli. Shooting starts around May, and Bowie has been offered a part as the villain. . .

More inkeeping with his self-image is a confirmed role as the Pied Piper of Hamelin in an American cable TV series called *Faery Tale Theatre* — Bowie flies to Toronto in March to begin filming.

Who is the tanned young Northern Beaches nitespot owner cruising past in the sleek BMW? **Paul Christie,** of course, who put some of his **Party Boys** profit into a share in an Avalon restaurant, Bip's Tavern, and was heading home to pack the bass case for another stint of touring. "I didn't want to go back on the road," he sighed, "but they offered us so much money. . ."

And the **Party Boys,** including miracle ingredient Shirley Strachan, are one of four bands to perform at a benefit for L.A.R.G. (Liquor Act Reform Group). Formed late last year, around the time of RAM's in-depth expose of the strict new licensing and fire regulations *(Issue 225)*, L.A.R.G. is working to publicise the threat to many existing rock venues and to lobby on behalf of the sizeable group of employees whose livelihood could be threatened. The benefit is cheerfully titled 'Let's Party', and kicks off at 7.30 pm at the Entertainment Centre on Friday, February 10. The rest of the bill is the **Radiators,** the **Allniters,** and Ignatius Jones' new band, **Arms And Legs.** Tickets at the Centre for $10.90, or $10 at East Coast Jeans stores and Farrell's Music at Brookvale.

Marc Bolan

"A new age of Bolan!" proclaims a postcard from the local reps. of the **Marc Bolan** Fan Club ("the second largest in Europe!"). Apparently the club has uncovered a full album's worth of previously unreleased material by Bolan, who died in a car crash in 1977. You can write to 'Mic', 29 Nottingham St. Berkeley, NSW 2506, for more info.

Most of **Laughing Clowns** are back in Sydney after their European tour to complete the mix on a new 12-inch three-tracker. Entitled *Eternally Yours*, it's due for release on February 20, and a new album, *Law Of Nature*, should be out early in March.

VIDEO MUSE

Cliches, Already!

THE Festering Season being what it is, this is difficult. What is that? and why? says Cheryl plaintively. Well dear, over the holidays, all the wee television music pundits fold their gaudy tents and decamp, leaving us slumped videots largely bereft of their supplies.

So, for your edification and mine, here is a list of music video cliches for you to count and amend, stretch and bend. It is but a sketch; it's remarkable how quickly the hackneyed rises to the top.

1. Fog.

2. Smoke. If you can't tell the difference, ask Phil Tripp. He explained the technical difference, but it's all gone cloudy on me. . .

3. Billowing curtains. Reference: the Russell Mulcahy Songbook, and his zillion dusty imitators. Which leads me inexorably to. . .

4. Billowing clothing, and/or Katie Pye fashions. As exemplified by Real Life's *Open Hearted* clip. Now, *there's* trust for you! Anyone who would spin his trailing rags in front of a flamethrower like that must be either mad or have great faith in the person allegedly controlling the dastardly thing.

5. Fire. See above, not to mention Duran Duran's *Union Of The Snake* — now that's torn it! There goes. . .

6. Desert Scenes! Reference: everyone from Lover Boy to Level 42, a British gang glimpsed but once with a goodish song called *Sun Goes Down (Livin' It Up)*. The clip (and the lovely dancing bassplayer) managed, albeit barely, to rise above the statutory figures on craggy outcrop against harsh Saharan/Australian/generally exotic (a category which includes Our Wide Brown Land lately and briefly) dessicated backdrop.

This invokes several subgroups, starring the obligatory Middle Eastern cum Arabian Nights, filigreed, kohled and littered with camel bazaar scenes, as popularised in the Stranglers' *Golden Brown*, maintained by such unlikely bedmates as the Clash, Iva Davies and Spandau Ballet. It also summons up the local product shot at Cronulla Beach, a positively Anzac tic rooted in *40,000 Horsemen* and Chips Rafferty's whirring grave — Son of *Gallipoli* meets Simon LeBon in hand-shredded burlap. Which greases naturally into. . .

7. Seascapes. With or without short persons with stubby little piano playing fingers, but always, *always* featuring Moody Stares at the horizon, searching for what? Whoever or whatever it is, it will be. . .

8. Grotesquely Tall, from being filmed at toe level, and/or. . .

9. Weirdly Misshapen, from being lit from beneath.

10. Military (Fascist, Communist, Revolutionary and, for the sake of brevity, Chinese) Paraphernalia. Start at *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (by the Beatles, back when Brontosauri wore bell-bottomed trousers), work forwards.

11. Medieval Imagery. We're running out of space, so just refer to anything the Church has committed to film. Along with. . .

12. Horses.

13. Stiletto heels crushing things.

14. Open cars cruising, especially through anywhere near (or like) Kings Cross.

15. Lips — lipsticked, pouting, licking, or involved in any other oral behaviour. Obviously there's more, like the obligatory overturning tables and swinging ceiling lamps, and we haven't even touched 'sluts' and their varieties. But you get the idea.

ANNIE BURTON

The Show Is Dead, Long Live The Show

MUSIC Video may lie a-mouldering in its grave, but the scams go marching on. Our industrial espionage agents have X-rayed several rock TV concepts in the files of the major networks.

Like the one where a robot is compere of a clip show? No live humans asking for pay rises or award upgrades, just the electronic voice in the thoroughly researched mobile ET/R2D2/C3PO/video jukebox clone lulling you from clip to clip.

The bosses nixed that one, so the producers proposed a massive computer that talked through a screen, played video games with itself (electronic self-abuse?) and answered viewer questions from its memory banks. Sort of an electronic Glenn A. Baker.

Then we have the proposed import of 'The Pop and Rocker Show', where contestants' wits are pitted against an agonising series of trivia questions about some act. The pay-off is the act appearing in concert in the studio. . . "That's right, Sally, the pop star with the greatest number of drug busts this year is Paul McCartney, and here are he and Linda, *live!*" Screams. . . masses rushing the stage. . . Sally passing out. . . zoom to Paul's red eyes and silly smile. . .

Then what say you secretly like Simon Townsend's *Wonderworld* but wish there were more clips on each segment? One proposal was made to feature five or six clips and only one news story in another programme for airing in the mid-afternoon slot. The Ten network decided against it, and the scenario has been gathering dust for nearly two years.

As a one-off, there is a proposal for an Australian Video Music Awards shebang which would look back over last year's output and feature simpering rock stars claiming they produced and directed their own clips, and. . . oh yeah. . . thanks to the 50 crew, 20 extras and the $40,000 the record company got stiffed for.

Another one-off project is taking place as you read this. (Well, maybe. . .) After at least a dozen local and overseas producers approached the promoters of Narara with the idea of capturing the celebration continuing, one major production house has proceeded with plans to tape several Australian acts and a couple of overseas artists for a 90-minute doco. Slated to cost big bucks — six figures — it is being planned for network release here and cable broadcast overseas. It's a tough number to put together, and is not a certainty yet.

But the most likely enterprise is Rod Muir's proposal for an hourly afternoon slot on Channel 9 in Sydney, with a simulcast likely on Muir's 2MMM. Rumour has it that Muir may team up with Michael Gudinski's Wired Productions. Channel 9's Managing Director is tight-lipped about this, while indicating that several video music projects have been proposed for the new season. He plans to approach them all with caution.

Channel 10 has a file marked simply 'Music', which contains over a dozen proposals of video music concepts, including the importation of *MTV* from America as either a late-night option or a regular weekend feature. That concept is being flogged by Ian Kennon, former General Manager of TEN, who holds the local rights to sell *MTV's* concert packages. (However this hasn't stopped Gudinski buying direct from the mega-music channel and featuring the specials on his *Stereo Video Show* and *Nightmoves*.)

However, three things are certain for the new year. Molly, Donnie and Lee Simon will all be back with their shows. Meanwhile 0/28 are taking tenders for the production of their rock package, but it is likely to remain the same with Basia Bonkowski retaining the VJ's seat. And Glenn A. Baker will be seen on Channel 9's *Today* show once a week reviewing records, and he is planning a television programme later this year covering his *Beatles Down Under* book. Plus, he has landed a pension plan with the *Video Age*, writing their video music column.

John Torv hopes to come back to Channel Ten with a half-hour clip show for the younger set if *Music Video* is not revived. Since I like to get mail and laughs too, why not submit your own proposals — addressed to TRIPP, c/o RAM — for a video music show, or ideas for the revival of Torv and Baker. We'll print the best ones and maybe even reach into our video stash bag and come up with a prize. Like a bit part in someone else's video clip.

PHIL TRIPP

Transit Lounge

PEOPLE, EVENTS, THINGS ON THE MOVE

The American music business doesn't seem to take this modern subversive nonsense about racial equality too seriously. . . Back at the dawn of rock, you had the 'race charts'; after 30 years of Equal Rights laws and anti-discrimination struggles, the annual poll of the prestigious *Billboard* magazine still have the categories 'Top Black Artist Of The Year', 'Top Black Single' and 'Top Black Album'. But at least you can cross over: **Michael Jackson,** who won all three, also took out the 'Top Pop Artist Of The Year'. (Men At Work came second).

"It's a great example of how incredibly unfair show business is," says *Wonderworld's* **Simon Townsend** about his debut album, *Simon Says,* on K-Tel. "I can't sing, don't sing and won't sing again. But thousands of aspiring young singers who would love a recording contract can't get one, but I can. . . What can I tell them? It's not enough to be talented. It's not enough to be persistent. It's not enough to have courage. Sometimes you've just got to be lucky too."

Doesn't it make you feel all nice and numb inside?

Whoops! Last issue we referred to the frontman of **Stupidity** as 'Gary' Hosie, when, as any fule kno, it's his brother, Don. Gary fronts the equally savoury outfit known as the **Mustard Club.**

The **New Christs** are getting serious! Instead of the usual breakup when a member leaves, a replacement has been found immediately, a record is due out in late March and a national tour is planned soon after. New member is guitarist **Richard Jakimyszyn** (with a soft 'g' as in 'toast'?), formerly of the Lime Spiders.

Sad to see that **Stevie Wright,** the former Easybeats lead singer whose solo career was being rejuvenated just before Christmas, busted on drug and breaking and entering charges just after we went to press last issue. Wright had narcotic hassles through the early 70s. . . The case is remanded till February 6.

And also said — for those with a long soul memory — to hear of the death of **Jackie Wilson** at the age of 49. One of *the* voices of the 60s, Wilson suffered a major heart attack several years back. Full obit. next issue.

What's a gold record worth these days? About 25 bucks if you're in **Rose Tattoo** and happen to be passing a neighbourhood pawn shop. Appears that one late member, now resident very West of Sydney, traded in his plated copies of *Rose Tattoo* and *Scarred For Life* for a little ready busfare. Quite by chance, one of his former colleagues heard they were on display and rescued them from ignominy for fifty bucks.

Adelaide's **Pepper Studios** last week formally celebrated the opening of their 'Phase 2' development. $1 million has been spent in extensions and new equipment for the two sound studios and film editing suite that began operations in 1981. The big improvements are in the film and video facility: founder Max Pepper claims that the new centre "offers everything that a television station does, and, in many cases, a lot more."

METRO MUSIC GALLERY

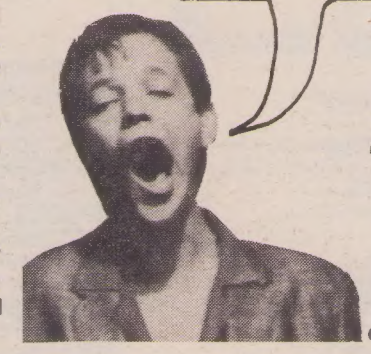
Beyond T-Shirts And Posters

It don't hang if it ain't got that swang? The operators of this new 'specialty gallery' in beautiful downtown Woolloomooloo intend to "exhibit the work of Illustrators and Photographers, Graphic and Video Artists, Painters and Designers working within, or for, the Australian Music Industry. . . or whose work is related to, or depicts the many facets, of our own Music Scene".

From this forest of caps and commas, the bottom line emerges: you can exhibit anything at Metro as long as it's music-related.

Doors open on March 1: interested basket weavers can contact **Victoria Jeffery** or **Bob Dickson** on (02) 358 5643. The address is 134 Cathedral St., which sounds rather similar to the former address of Green Records and the current one of Regular Records; but no conceptual relationship will be assumed until proven guilty.

CALLING ALL LAYABOUTS!



Looking nothing like his stage name, LEROY SUAVE summons all past members and fans of Sydney inner west r'n'b institution, the LAYABOUTS, to a special series of reunion gigs. At Rozelle's Rose, Shamrock & Thistle Hotel, Mondays in February, a basic nucleus will be joined by various members of the 30-plus musos that Leroy estimates have passed through the band since 1976. Since some of these graduated to acts as disparate as Slim Dusty, the Laughing Clowns, Moving Pictures and Kevin Borich, the gathering could be. . . intriguing.

LONDON DESPATCH

Marie Ryan

1983 ended with a bang (literally) outside Harrod's, but there weren't too many of us who were sorry to see it go (the year, not Harrod's). You don't need me to tell you it was another lousy year for music, with record companies and groups colluding to produce enough crap to challenge even British Nuclear Fuel's efforts last year.

There is only one gig that I can remember as being truly brilliant, and that was **Elvis Costello** at the Hammersmith Palais. The rest are just lost in a blur of mediocrity somewhere in the recesses of my memory. (A fancy way of saying that my memory ain't too good these days.)

So what's happening in London this year? Well, to tell the truth, not a great deal. One of the few bands causing a buzz round town is Aussie combo, the **Moodists.** They started off the year with an unexceptional performance at the latest ICA Rock Week, but people seemed to like them anyway. Singer **Dave Graney** was nursing a killer of a hangover, and bassist **Chris Walsh** was pissed as the proverbial newt — and it showed.

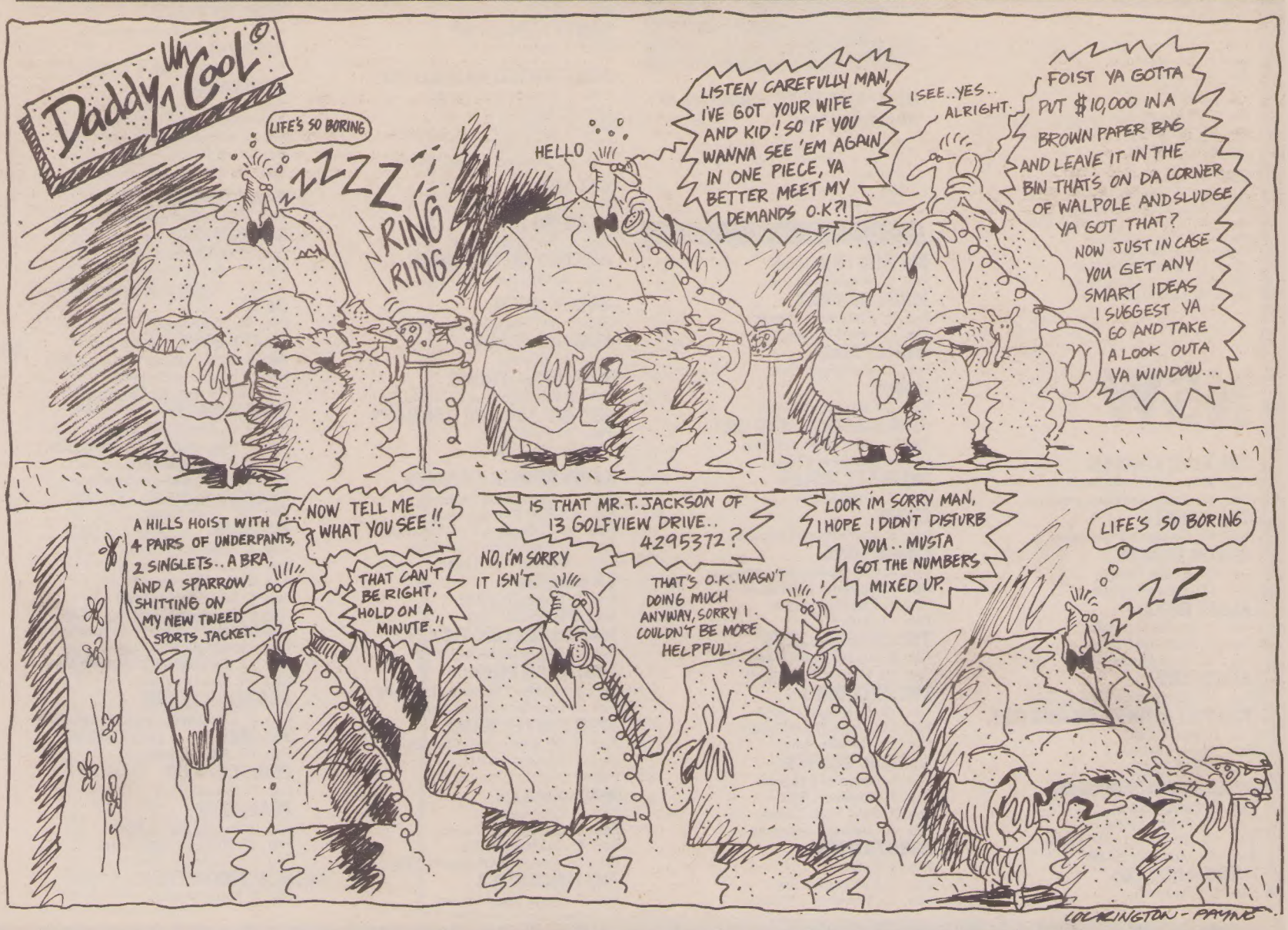
The Yuletide season: While Les Moodistes seriously set about underwriting the 1984 profits of British and German breweries, the **Go-Betweens** and New York were busy discovering each other's delights. The GOBs decided that NY was indeed a fab place, and only reluctantly hopped on the plane to come back to sour old London. Relationships between the band and the UK took a distinct turn for the worst when the Immigration Officer at Heathrow airport refused to let Grant and Robert back in the country. After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, they were given 24 hours to pack their belongings and leave. Mild-mannered manager Clive Miller immediately got a fast-talking lawyer onto the case, and just to prove that when it rains, it *pours*, when the band finally made it through Customs and Immigration, they were greeted with the news that they'd been dropped by Rough Trade. The full story and more in an upcoming issue. . .

Joe Strummer joined the long list of rock'n' roll daddies over Xmas. His girlfriend Gabrielle gave birth to a daughter. Don't know how she's going to get along in life with a moniker like Jazz Strummer though. . .

Australia's gauntest guitarist, **Rowland Howard** has finally extracted digit from posterior and got down to some serious rehearsal of his band **These Immortal Souls.** Included in the group are **Jeff Wegener** on drums (Laughing Clowns) and **Chris Walsh** on bass (Moodists). **Genevieve McGuckin** will be contributing keyboards. The group hope to be recording shortly and the results will see the light of day on Mute, though the band is not expected to play live.

Sex and Sensationalism: **Heroin** is big news in the UK at the moment with even respectable rags like *The Guardian* running stories on schoolgirls prostituting themselves to get the drug. It's claimed that it's possible to buy a bag of the stuff for ten quid and that it's the most easily obtainable drug in Britain, although intermittent and well-publicised drug busts by the Customs people temporarily dry up the supply. The general consensus of people working in the addict welfare area seems to be that the increase is a direct result of the current Government's draconian economic policies. As ye shall sow, so shall ye reap, and the current harvest is a generation of youth without hope.

On that joyous note I'll say goodbye. It is 1984 after all. . .


Daddy Uh Cool
LIFE'S SO BORING
ZZZZ
RING RING
HELLO
LISTEN CAREFULLY MAN, I'VE GOT YOUR WIFE AND KID! SO IF YOU WANNA SEE 'EM AGAIN IN ONE PIECE, YA BETTER MEET MY DEMANDS O.K?!
I SEE.. YES.. ALRIGHT..
FOIST YA GOTTA PUT $10,000 IN A BROWN PAPER BAG AND LEAVE IT IN THE BIN THAT'S ON DA CORNER OF WALPOLE AND SLUDGE YA GOT THAT?
NOW JUST IN CASE YOU GET ANY SMART IDEAS I SUGGEST YA GO AND TAKE A LOOK OUTA YA WINDOW...
A HILLS HOIST WITH 4 PAIRS OF UNDERPANTS, 2 SINGLETS.. A BRA, AND A SPARROW SHITTING ON MY NEW TWEED SPORTS JACKET.
NOW TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE!!
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT, HOLD ON A MINUTE!!
IS THAT MR. T. JACKSON OF 13 GOLFVIEW DRIVE.. 4295372?
NO, I'M SORRY IT ISN'T.
THAT'S O.K. WASN'T DOING MUCH ANYWAY, SORRY I COULDN'T BE MORE HELPFUL.
LOOK IM SORRY MAN, I HOPE I DIDN'T DISTURB YOU.. MUSTA GOT THE NUMBERS MIXED UP.
LIFE'S SO BORING
ZZZZ
LOCKINGTON - PAYNE

RAM ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

OS TOURS

ROBERT PLANT
Feb: 3: Sydney Entertainment Centre.
Feb. 4: Canberra Sports Centre.
Feb. 6: Melbourne Entertainment Centre.
Feb. 11: Brisbane Festival Hall.

HALL AND OATES
Feb. 3: Civic Theatre — Newcastle.
Feb. 4: Entertainment Centre — Sydney.
Feb. 5: Entertainment Centre — Melbourne.

ELTON JOHN
Feb. 28, 29: Entertainment Centre — Melbourne.
Mar. 1-3: Entertainment Centre — Melbourne.
Mar. 6, 7: Entertainment Centre — Perth.
Mar. 9: Memorial Drive — Adelaide.
Mar. 12-14: Festival Hall — Brisbane.
Mar. 16-22: Entertainment Centre — Sydney.

MOODY BLUES
Feb. 9: Entertainment Centre — Perth.
Feb. 12: Memorial Drive — Adelaide.
Feb. 21: Entertainment — Melbourne.
Feb. 25: Festival Hall — Brisbane.
Feb. 29: Entertainment Centre — Sydney.

KENNY ROGERS:
Mar. 13: Entertainment Centre — Perth.
Mar. 17: Memorial Drive — Adelaide.
Mar. 21: Entertainment Centre — Melbourne.
Mar. 25: Festival Hall — Brisbane.
Mar. 29: Entertainment Centre — Sydney.

POLICE
Mar. 2: Showgrounds — Sydney.
Mar. 4: Melbourne — (T.B.A.).

DR. FEELGOOD
Feb. 21: Bluegum Hotel
Feb. 22: Mitchell College
Feb. 23: Cabbage Tree Hotel
Feb. 24: Cronulla Workers Club (early)
Feb. 24: Cabramatta Starduft Hotel (late)
Feb. 25: Selinas
Feb. 26: Chevron
Feb. 28: Coffs Harbour
Feb. 29: Bombay Rock, Gold Coast
March 1: Mansfield Tavern, Bris.
March 2: James Cook Uni. Townsville
March 3: Mooloolaba, Sunshine Coast
March 4: Jet Club, Coolangatta

SANDII AND THE SUNSETZ
Feb. 9: San Migeul Hotel
Feb. 10: Cronulla Workers Club
Feb. 12: Chevron
Feb. 14: Italo Club, Lismore
Feb. 15: Toowoomba
Feb. 16: Qld. Institute of Techn.
Feb. 17: Glenn Hotel, Bris.
Feb. 18: Playroom, Qld.
Feb. 19: Playroom, Qld.
Feb. 24: Selinas
Feb. 25: Doyalson RSL
Feb. 26: Penrith Leagues
Feb. 29: Jump Club
March 3: The Venue
March 4: Pier Hotel

SKY
Feb. 29: Concert Hall, Perth
March 1: Concert Hall, Perth
March 4: Thebarton Town Hall, S.A.
March 7: Canberra Theatre
March 9: Festival Hall, Bris.
March 11: Opera House, Syd.
March 13: Concert Hall, Melb.
March 15: Concert Hall, Melb.

NSW

THE ACCESSORIES
Feb. 3: Penrith Leagues Club
Feb. 10: Campbelltown Leagues
THE AGENTS
Feb. 10: Governers Pleasure
ALCAN ZEPHYR
Feb. 10: Union Hotel
Feb. 11: Jolly Frog Inn
ALLEY BOYZ
Feb. 3: Blacktown RSL
Feb. 4: War And Peace
Feb. 10: Grey Gums Hotel
ALLNITERS
Feb. 15: St. George Sailing Club
MURPHY ANDERSON AND COY.
Feb. 3: Rex Hotel
Feb. 10: Rex Hotel
THE AMAZING WOOLOOMOOLOOSERS
Feb. 3: Palace Hotel
Feb. 10: Palace Hotel
Feb. 12: Strawberry Hill Hotel
Feb. 16: Mosman Hotel
ARMS AND LEGS
Feb. 3: Chevron
A. T. WELLS
Feb. 4: Trade Union Club
AUSSIE MAYO
Feb. 3: Cootamundra Country Club
Feb. 4: Cootamundra Country Club
BACKSEAT BOYS
Feb. 7: Epping Hotel
BEL AIRES
Feb. 11: Manly Vale
THE BENT ELBOWS
Feb. 3: Royal Hotel
Feb. 10: Royal Hotel
BERDUM BERDUM
Feb. 5: Avalon RSL
Feb. 9: Royal Antler Hotel
Feb. 11: Avalon RSL

HALL AND OATS appearing in Australia from:
Feb. 3: Civic Theatre — Newcastle.
Feb. 4: Entertainment Centre Sydney.
Feb. 5: Entertainment Centre Melbourne.

BIG RED TRACTOR
Feb. 3: Musicians Club
BIRDS OF PREY
Feb. 3: Greenfields Tavern
Feb. 10: Penrith Leagues
BRING PHILIP
Feb. 3: Musicians Club
BRONX
Feb. 10: Namatjira Hotel
JOHN CASTRAY AND COY.
Feb. 3: Vicar Of Wakefield
Feb. 4: Budgewoi Hotel
CELIBATE RIFLES
Feb. 3: Hotel Manly
CHAIN
Feb. 5: Canterbury Leagues
CHAMPIONS
Feb. 3: Campbelltown Leagues
Feb. 4: Governers Pleasure
Feb. 5: Parkways Hotel
Feb. 11: Palias
THE CRYSTAL SETS
Feb. 3: Harold Park Hotel
Feb. 10: Harold Park Hotel
THE CYCLONES
Feb. 10: Greengate Hotel
Feb. 11: Kings Head Tavern
Feb. 13: Rozelle Hotel
CYRIL B. BUNTER
Feb. 3: Illawarra Leagues
Feb. 4: Doyalson RSL
Feb. 9: New York Tavern
Feb. 10: Balmain Leagues
DEBUTANTES
Feb. 3: Selinas
Feb. 9: Carringbah Inn
Feb. 10: Governers Pleasure
DEE MINOR AND THE DISCHORDS
Feb. 3: Greenfields Tavern
Feb. 4: Sydney Cove Tavern
GUY DICKERSON
Feb. 12: Hotel Bondi
DIVINYLS
Feb. 10: Narwee Hotel
Feb. 15: Shellharbour Workers Club
Feb. 15: The Dreaming
DROP BEARS
Feb. 10 Chevron
DYNAMIC DUO
Feb. 4: Ulladulla Ex-Services
Feb. 5: Harp Hotel
EAST END
Feb. 3: Sydney Cove Tavern
Feb. 4: Canterbury Bankstown Leagues Club
Feb. 16: Namatjira Hotel
ECHO ELEVEN
Feb. 3: Dee Why Hotel
Feb. 4: Royal Antler Hotel
Feb. 5: Cabbage Tree Hotel
Feb. 10: Lewisham Hotel
ELICTRIC PANDAS
Feb. 4: Hotel Bondi
Feb. 11: Hotel Bondi
EUROGLIDERS
Feb. 14: Croatian Club
Feb. 15: Glennfields Tavern
Feb. 16: Dee Why Hotel
FAULTLINE
Feb. 3: Namatjira Hotel
THE FINAL SOLUTION
Feb. 4: Reflections Wine Bar
FLAMING HANDS
Feb. 3: Dee Why Hotel
Feb. 4: Miranda Hotel
Feb. 5: Cabbage Tree Hotel
Feb. 14: Byron Bay Ex-Services
FLASHBACK
Feb. 11: Denison
Hotel
FLYING FENDER BENDERS
Feb. 11: ANU Union Bar (ACT)
FOREIGN BODY
Feb. 3: Mona Vale Hotel
Feb. 4: Selinas
Feb. 11: Namatjira Hotel
Feb. 12: Nth. Cronulla Hotel
FOREVER 15
Feb. 14: Epping Hotel
FORTY FLOORS UP
Feb. 5: Cecil Hotel
FRUSTRATED BACHELORS
Feb. 3: Racecourse Hotel
Feb. 4: Bronte Surf Club
Feb. 8: Maroubra Beach Hotel
Feb. 11: Coogee Surf Club
Feb. 15: Maroubra Beach Hotel
GET SET
Feb. 4: Hotel Manly
HEAD ON
Feb. 4: Namatjira Hotel
HISTORY OF THE CHAIR
Feb. 14: Pitts Lismore Hotel
HONEY MOON
Feb. 3: St. George Sailing Club
HOODOO GURUS
Feb. 3: Chevron
JOHN PAUL YOUNG
Feb. 9: Shellharbour Workers Club
JOY JOY AND THE COL BOYS
Feb. 4: Hotel Bondi
Feb. 11: Hotel Bondi
KEVIN BORICH EXPRESS
Feb. 11: Governers Pleasure
Feb. 12: Port Kembla Leagues
Feb. 14: Collegians Football Club
Feb. 15: Katoomba Golf Club
Feb. 16: New York Tavern
LA BOUCHE
Feb. 3: Mittagong RSL
Feb. 4: Doyleson RSL
MARK LEES ONE TICKET
Feb. 4: Cat And Fiddle Hotel
LIGHTNING ROCK
Feb. 4: Western Suburbs Leagues
Feb. 9: Foqular Furlane Club
LITTLE RIVER BAND
Feb. 3: St. Georges Sailing Club
Feb. 4: Blacktown RSL
Feb. 5: Labour Club (ACT)
MAD GORILLA
Feb. 3: Tourmaline
Feb. 4: Market Sq. Tavern
Feb. 5: Chester Hill RSL
Feb. 10: Bankstown Sports Club
THE MAGNETICS
Feb. 4: Kings Head Tavern
Feb. 9: Sawdust Hotel
Feb. 12: Orwells
Feb. 14: Rozelle Hotel
MANDRAKE
Feb. 10: Hotel Bondi
MATAQALI MUSIC
Feb. 3: Rex Hotel
Feb. 4: Rex Hotel
Feb. 10: Rex Hotel
JOHN McCAULEY
Feb. 3: Collector Tavern
Feb. 4: Vicar of Wakefield
PATRICK McMAHON
Feb. 3: Bowral Country Club
Feb. 9: Sheilas
Feb. 10: Miranda Hotel
MENTAL AS ANYTHING
Feb. 7: Croatian Club
Feb. 8: St. George Sailing Club
Feb. 9: Newcastle Workers Club
Feb. 10: Blacktown RSL
Feb. 11: Manly Vale
Feb. 12: Maroubra Seals
MIRRORED IMAGE
Feb. 9: Hotel Bondi
Feb. 10: Austral Bowling Club
MI SEX
Feb. 3: Bankstown Sports Club
Feb. 4: Canberra Southern Cross Club (ACT)
Feb. 5: Ainslie Football Club
Feb. 6: Wagga Leagues
Feb. 8: Albury SS and A Club
Feb. 9: Goulburn Valley Hotel
Feb. 10: Leaton Ex-Services
Feb. 11: Young Ex-Services
Feb. 12: Bathurst Leagues
Feb. 14: Croatian Club
Feb. 15: Dapto Leagues
MONDO ROCK
Feb. 3: Balmain Leagues
Feb. 4: Parramatta Leagues
Feb. 5: Chevron
Feb. 8: Bankstown Sports Club
Feb. 9: Cronulla Leagues
Feb. 10: Manly Vale
Feb. 11: Selinas
Feb. 12: Penrith Leagues
MOVING PARTS
Feb. 4: Chevron
TED MULRY GANG
Feb. 3: Labour Club (ACT)
Feb. 8: Lavington Sports Club
NEW CHRISTS
Feb. 3: Royal Antler Hotel
NEW DISTANCE
Feb. 12: Royal Antler Hotel
NIANUNGAI
Feb. 3: Hotel Bondi
NO DRAMA
Feb. 3: Sandringham Hotel
Feb. 4: Forest Lodge Hotel
Feb. 9: Kings Head Tavern
Feb. 10: Sandringham Hotel
Feb. 11: Mosman Hotel
NON STOP DANCERS
Feb. 10: St. Georges Sailing Club
NUMBER ONE
Feb. 9: Kings Head Tavern
Feb. 10: Pearly Shells Hotel
Feb. 11: Wollongong Workers Club
OL'55
Feb. 16: Stallions
PARTY BOYS
Feb. 8: Shellharbour Workers Club
Feb. 9: Royal Antler Hotel
Feb. 10: St. George Sailing Club
PARTY GIRLS
Feb. 3: Sydney Cove Tavern
Feb. 4: Hawkesbury Sporting Club
Feb. 5: Carringbah Inn
Feb. 6: Byron Bay Ex-Services
Feb. 15: Park Beach
Feb. 16: Union Hotel
PASSION
Feb. 3: Shellharbour Inn
Feb. 4: Oxford Hotel
Feb. 5: Nth. Cronulla Hotel
Feb. 8: Blue Marlin Hotel
Feb. 9: Batemans Bowling Club
Feb. 10: Australian Hotel Cooma
Feb. 11: Goulburn Workers Club
Feb. 12: Canberra Minuka Workers
Feb. 15: Manzil Room
PECULIAR CLERK
Feb. 3: Campbelltown Catholic Club
PEL MEL
Feb. 17: Hotel Bondi
PERISCOPE UP
Feb. 7: Names Club
PLAYBOYS
Feb. 3: Bexley North Hotel
Feb. 10: Bexley North Hotel
Feb. 11: Collector Tavern
PLAYFUL KITTENS
Feb. 3: Hotel Manly
PROPHECY
Feb. 16: Hotel Bondi
PSEUDO ECHO
Feb. 7: Bluegum Hotel
Feb. 8: Sheilas
Feb. 9: Carringbah Inn
Feb. 10: Chevron
Feb. 11: Corrimal Leagues
Feb. 12: Avalon RSL
QED
Feb. 4: Chevron
RADIO BREAKERS
Feb. 16: Royal Antler Hotel
RADIO THERAPY
Feb. 3: Austral Bowling Club
Feb. 5: Illawarra Master Builders Club
RAMS
Feb. 3: Wyong Leagues
Feb. 4: Sydney Cove Tavern
Feb. 8: Beattie Street
Feb. 11: Governers Pleasure
Feb. 12: Parkway Hotel
Feb. 15: Beattie Street
THE REASONS WHY
Feb. 8: Vulcan Hotel
Feb. 16: Racecourse Hotel
REDGUM
Feb. 3: Casino RSL
Feb. 4: Sawtell RSL
ROSE TATTOO
Feb. 9: Foqular Furlane Club
SAMURAI TRASH
Feb. 8: Strawberry Hill Hotel
SCARABUS
Feb. 9: Rozelle Hotel
Feb. 10: Forest Inn
Feb. 16: Rozelle Hotel
SCATTERED ACES
Feb. 3: Blacktown Soccer Club
Feb. 4: Carringbah Inn
Feb. 8: Dee Why Hotel
Feb. 9: Shellharbour Workers Club
SCHLEM MEN
Feb. 4: Royal Antler Hotel
SINCLAIR AND YOUNG
Feb. 4: Rex Hotel
Feb. 5: Hotel Bondi
Feb. 11: Rex Hotel
SLIPPERY WHEN WET
Feb. 11: Palais
SNAKE
Feb. 3: Wyong Leagues
Feb. 9: Namatjira Hotel
Feb. 10: Dee Why Hotel
SPARE PARTS
Feb. 3: Shanneys
Feb. 5: Blacktown Inn
Feb. 10: West Tower Tavern
Feb. 12: Blacktown Inn
STORMY MONDAY
Feb. 3. Cabbage Tree Hotel
Feb. 8: Illawarra Yacht Club
Feb. 10: Blacktown Soccer Club
STUPIDITY
Feb. 4: Sydney Cove Tavern
SURVIVAL
Feb. 15: Lavington Sports Club
SWEATY PALMS
Feb. 11: ANU Union Bar (ACT)
TABLE WAITERS
Feb. 10: Chevron
TOTAL FIRE BAND
Feb. 3: Eastwood Hotel
Feb. 4: Royal Antler Hotel
Feb. 10: Eastwood Hotel
Feb. 11: Bankstown RSL
Feb. 12: Royal Antler Hotel
THE TURKEYS
Feb. 3: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 4: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 5: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 6: Dominos
Feb. 7: Stallions
Feb. 8: Campbelltown Scandals
TWO BOB WATCH
Feb. 3: Sheilas
Feb. 4: Campbelltown Scandals
Feb. 9: New York Tavern
Feb. 10: Didi's
Feb. 11: Mosman Hotel
UK MISFITS
Feb. 8: Kempsie RSL
Feb. 10: Nambucca Heads
Feb. 16: Maryong Hotel
U4 MYSTICS
Feb. 10: Lewisham Hotel
UNDER THE SUN
Feb. 16: Pitts Lismore Hotel
UNIT 17
Feb. 8: Sandringham Hotel
Feb. 15: Sandringham Hotel
UTTER CHAOS
Feb. 9: Maryong Hotel
VICKY O'KEEFE BAND
Feb. 4: Corrimal Leagues
Feb. 5: Stranded
Feb. 8: Molly Mook Golf Club
Feb. 9: Shellharbour Workers Club
Feb. 10: Orange Ex-Services
Feb. 11: Lithgow Workers Club
Feb. 12: St. George Budapest Club
VULGAR BEATMEN
Feb. 5: Chevron
LEE WALKER BAND
Feb. 8: Canberra Labour Club (ACT)
Feb. 9: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 10: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 11: Royals Rugby Club (ACT)
Feb. 12: Illawarra Master Builder Club
Feb. 13: Dominos
Feb. 16: Didi's
WIDE OPEN
Feb. 8: Trains Bistro
Feb. 10: Adams Apple Bistro
Feb. 11: Narwee Hotel
Feb. 13: Wollongong Workers Club
Feb. 15: Trains Bistro
WORLD WAR 24
Feb. 3: Royal Antler Hotel
MERCY YOUNG
Feb. 3: Five Bells
Feb. 8: Five Bells
Feb. 9: Five Bells
Feb. 10: Five Bells
Feb. 15: Five Bells
Feb. 16: Five Bells
ZARSOFF BROS.
Feb. 15: Illawarra Yacht Club
ZEETONS
Feb. 4: Hotel Manly

VIC

AIRPLAY
Feb. 4: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 15: De Marcos Hotel
SHARON ANDERSON'S MOTOWN JACKETS
Feb. 11: Aberdeen Hotel
AUSSIE MAYO
Feb. 9: Bensons Hotel
Feb. 11: Sherbourne Hotel
AUSSIE NEIGHBOURS
Feb. 3: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 8: Croydon Hotel
Feb. 9: Royal Hotel
Feb. 11: Billboard
Feb. 16: Royal Hotel
AUSTRALIAN CRAWL
Feb. 11: Festival Hall
AXATACK
Feb. 6: Central Club Hotel
THE BEACH NUTS
Feb. 10: Prince Of Wales
Feb. 11: Frankston Mechanics
BEARGARDEN
Feb. 4: Venetian Room
BIVOCAL
Feb. 4: Beaumaris Hotel
Feb. 8: De Marcos Hotel
BLUES BROS. REVIVAL
Feb. 10: Moonee Ponds Tavern
THE BOSCH
Feb. 16: Moonee Ponds Tavern
BRAVE MEN
Feb. 3: Ritchies
Feb. 5: Pier Hotel
BRODERICK SMITH'S BIG COMBO
Feb. 3: Central Club Hotel
Feb. 10: Central Club Hotel
Feb. 12: Moonee Ponds Tavern
Feb. 17: Central Club Hotel
CAPTAIN SPAULDING
Feb. 5: Moonee Ponds Tavern
THE CASUALS
Feb. 4: Aberdeen Hotel
Feb. 11: Creole Club
CHAIN
Feb. 3: Central Club Hotel
Feb. 4: Prince Of Wales
Feb. 5: Ocean Grove Hotel
THE CROWD
Feb. 8: Creole Club
Feb. 15: Creole Club
CRUSHED BUZZARDS
Feb. 14: Central Club Hotel
DEAR ENEMY
Feb. 3: Eureka Hotel
Feb. 4: Armadale Hotel
THE GANGSTERS
Feb. 3: Royal Hotel
Feb. 4: Ritchies Nite Spot
Feb. 5: Bensons Hotel
Feb. 6: Billboard
Feb. 8: Bensons Hotel
Feb. 9: Beaumaris Hotel
Feb. 10: Royal Hotel
Feb. 14: The Venue
Feb. 15: Bensons Hotel
Feb. 16: De Marcos Hotel
GEISHA DETAIL
Feb. 3: Prospect Hill
Feb. 4: Westside, Tarmac Hotel
GIMIX
Feb. 3: Beaumaris Hotel
Feb. 4: Sherbourne Hotel
Feb. 5: Croydon Hotel
Feb. 9: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 11: Astradome
Feb. 14: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 16: Bensons Hotel
HONEYMOON IN GREEN
Feb. 4: Central Club Hotel
JENNIFER LEE BAND
Feb. 3: Astradome
JUMPIN JIVE
Feb. 4: Aberdeen Hotel
Feb. 11: Aberdeen Hotel
PAUL KELLY
Feb. 4: Creole Club
KIDS IN THE KITCHEN
Feb. 11: Central Club Hotel
THE LATEST THING FROM ENGLAND
Feb. 4: Grainstore
LITTLE RIVER BAND
Feb. 7: Dorset Gardens
Feb. 8: Astradome
Feb. 9: Billboard
Feb. 10: Ritchies
Feb. 11: Tarmac Hotel
Feb. 12: Pier Hotel
Feb. 14: Ocean Grove
Feb. 15: Ocean Grove
THE PAUL McKAY SOUND
Feb. 4: Moonee Ponds Tavern
Feb. 11: Moonee Ponds Tavern
MENTAL AS ANYTHING
Feb. 3: Prospect Hil
Feb. 4: Tarmac Hotel
TED MULRY GANG
Feb. 4: Goulburn Valley Hotel
Feb. 5: Altona Workingmans Club
Feb. 7: The Venue
Feb. 10: Rosebud RSL
Feb. 11: Tarmac Hotel
Feb. 12: Eureka Hotel
Feb. 13: Port Campbell Hotel
Feb. 15: The Barn
NEWS AT SIX
Feb. 3: Aberdeen Hotel
OL' 55
Feb. 3: Highpoint Shopping Centre (afternoon)
Feb. 3: Moonee Ponds Tavern (night)
Feb 4: Dorset Gardens (early)
Feb. 4: Billboards (late)
Feb. 5: San Remo Ballroom
Feb. 6: Aberdeen Hotel
Feb 7: Hunters Lodge
Feb. 8: Railways Club
Feb. 9: Sherbourne Hotel
Feb. 10: Essendon Bowling Club (early)
Feb. 10: Nth. Melb. Football Club (late)
Feb. 11: Collenda Hotel
Feb. 12: Altona Workers Club
BRENT PARLANE
Feb. 3: Royal Hotel
Feb. 4: Stones
Feb. 5: One, C, One
Feb. 6: Carlton Club
Feb. 7: Lincolnshire Arms
Feb. 8: Troubador
Feb. 9: The Harp Hotel
Feb. 11: Boundary Hotel
Feb. 13: Carlton Club
Feb. 14: Lincolnshire Arms
PETE BEST BEATLES
Feb. 3: Macys
Feb. 4: Macys
PHANTOM BAND
Feb. 3: Prince Of Wales
Feb. 4: Prospect Hill
REAL LIFE
Feb. 3: The Venue
Feb. 4: Village Green Hotel
Feb. 5: The Club
RHYTHMATICS
Feb. 3: Aberdeen Hotel
Feb. 4: Creole Club
Feb. 9: Panton Hills Hotel
Feb. 10: Aberdeen Hotel
Feb. 11: Creole Club
ROCKET 88 BLUES BAND
Feb. 3: Creole Club
ROCK STEADY
Feb. 11: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 12: Bensons Hotel
Feb. 13: Billboard
Feb. 15: Croydon Hotel
Feb. 16: Beaumaris Hotel
SHUFFLING HUNGARIANS
Feb. 10: Moonee Ponds Tavern
SOLE TWISTERS
Feb. 3: Creole Club
Feb. 8: Central Club
Feb. 9: Moonee Ponds Tavern
Feb. 11: Golden Valley Hotel
SPANIARDS
Feb. 3: Grainstore Tavern
SURVIVAL
Feb. 7: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 9: Nth. Melb. Football Club
Feb. 10: Beaumaris Hotel
Feb. 11: Ritchies Nite Spot
Feb. 12: Croydon Hotel
Feb. 16: Sherbourne Hotel
TINSLEY WATERSHOUSE BAND
Feb. 3: Royal Hotel
Feb. 4: Station Hotel
THE TURKEYS
Feb. 10: De Marcos Hotel
Feb. 11: Beaumaris Hotel
Feb. 16: Nth. Melb. Football Club
LEE WALKER BAND
Feb. 3: Main Hotel
Feb. 4: Astradome
WENDY AND THE ROCKETTS
Feb. 3: Ritchies Nite Spot
Feb. 4: Manhattan Hotel
Pier Hotel
WILD TURKEYS
Feb. 9: Creole Club
WINDSOR JAMM
Feb. 7: Central Club Hotel

S.A.

AUSTRALIAN CRAWL
Feb. 12: Thebarton Entertainment Centre

TED MULRY GANG
Feb. 16: S.A. Football Club
SURVIVAL
Feb. 3: Westlands Hotel
Feb. 4: Westlands Hotel
Feb. 5: Westlands Hotel

W.A.

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS
Feb. 3: Wiz Bar
Feb. 4: Old Melbourne Hotel
Feb. 5: Captain Sterling
Feb. 8: Underground
Feb. 9: Red Parrot
Feb. 10: Wiz Bar
Feb. 11: Orient Hotel
Feb. 12: Captain Sterling
Feb. 16: Kalgoolie

PARTICLES
Feb. 3: Wiz Bar
Feb. 4: Old Melbourne Hotel
Feb. 5: Captain Sterling
Feb. 8: Underground
Feb. 9: Red Parrot
Feb. 10: Wiz Bar
Feb. 11: Orient Hotel
Feb. 12: Captain Sterling
Feb. 16: Kalgoolie

TAS

AUSTRALIAN CRAWL
Feb. 7: Devonport Theatre
Feb. 8: Launceston Theatre
Feb. 9: Hobart Theatre
Feb. 10: Rocky Cape

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13 April — 26 April	6 April
27 April — 10 May	20 April
11 May — 24 May	4 May
25 May — 7 June	18 May
8 June — 21 June	1 June
22 June — 5 July	15 June
6 July — 19 July	29 June
20 July — 2 Aug	13 July
3 Aug — 16 Aug	27 July
17 Aug — 30 Aug	10 Aug
31 Aug — 13 Sept	24 Aug
14 Sept — 27 Sept	7 Sept
28 Sept — 11 Oct	21 Sept
12 Oct — 25 Oct	5 Oct
26 Oct — 8 Nov	19 Oct
9 Nov — 22 Nov	2 Nov
23 Nov — 6 Dec	16 Nov
7 Dec — 20 Dec	30 Nov
21 Dec — 3 Jan	14 Dec

Transit Lounge

PEOPLE, EVENTS, THINGS ON THE MOVE

Mr. and Mrs. McCartney, current world champion Most Busted Millionaire Musos, relax at the headquarters of Smokers Unlimited.

'CHARACTERS' At The GAP

New Cabaret At Trades Extends Season

After three months under new management, the new cabaret room established early in 1983 at the Sydney Trade Union Club has started to claw its way into profitability. Although still in the red overall, recent successes like the Funny Stories Xmas Party and the Not Solely But Mostly Women In Cabaret have given the organisers of THE GAP confidence to commit to a month-long season of *Characters.*

"An evening with Australia's top new female comics," is organiser Larry Buttrose's succinct description. Extending the talent revealed during the Mostly Women season, the performers include celebrated cartoonist VICTORIA ROBERTS, MANDY and MELANIE SALOMON, ANGELA MOORE (aka 'Shirley Purvis' on the Newcastle airwaves), JULIE McCROSSIN, PAMELA COCABOLA BROWN, and the distaff side of GROTESQUI'S MONKEY CHOIR.

Tuesdays through Thursdays at 9pm, for laffs with the ladies.

SALAMANDER JIM (Temporary Axolotl)

Sydney chamber music lovers will be overjoyed at the announcement of a limited season trio playing the inner city in February/March. Kim Salmon of the Scientists, Richard Ploog of the Church, and Tex Perkins, formerly of Tex Deadly & The Dum Dums, Beasts Of Bourbon and the C.E.S. are getting together under the classical title of 'Salamander Jim'. The usual scrawled release maintains that it's "an original group playing their own music that isn't a copy of any of the groups mentioned". The party is expected to end when Kim has to fly off to London to join the rest of the Scientists on their mission to drag Western Europe back into the swamp. . .

Kim Salmon and Tex Perkins

Sydney's **Dee Minor & the Dischords** are calling it quits this week with a farewell gig at the Bayview Tavern.

Renee Geyer is presenting a special 'intimate' show at **Kinselas** (February 2 till 4) under the soubriquet of 'Renee Geyer's Soul Cha Cha'.

Promoters have cancelled the **Robert Plant** concert scheduled for February 4 at the **Canberra Sports Centre** ("the venue is too small for the staging and production required"), and added another concert at **Newcastle's Civic Theatre** on the 11th. Contrary to what you might have expected, there will be no charter buses for the unlucky Canberra ticket holders; a refund is the best offer going.

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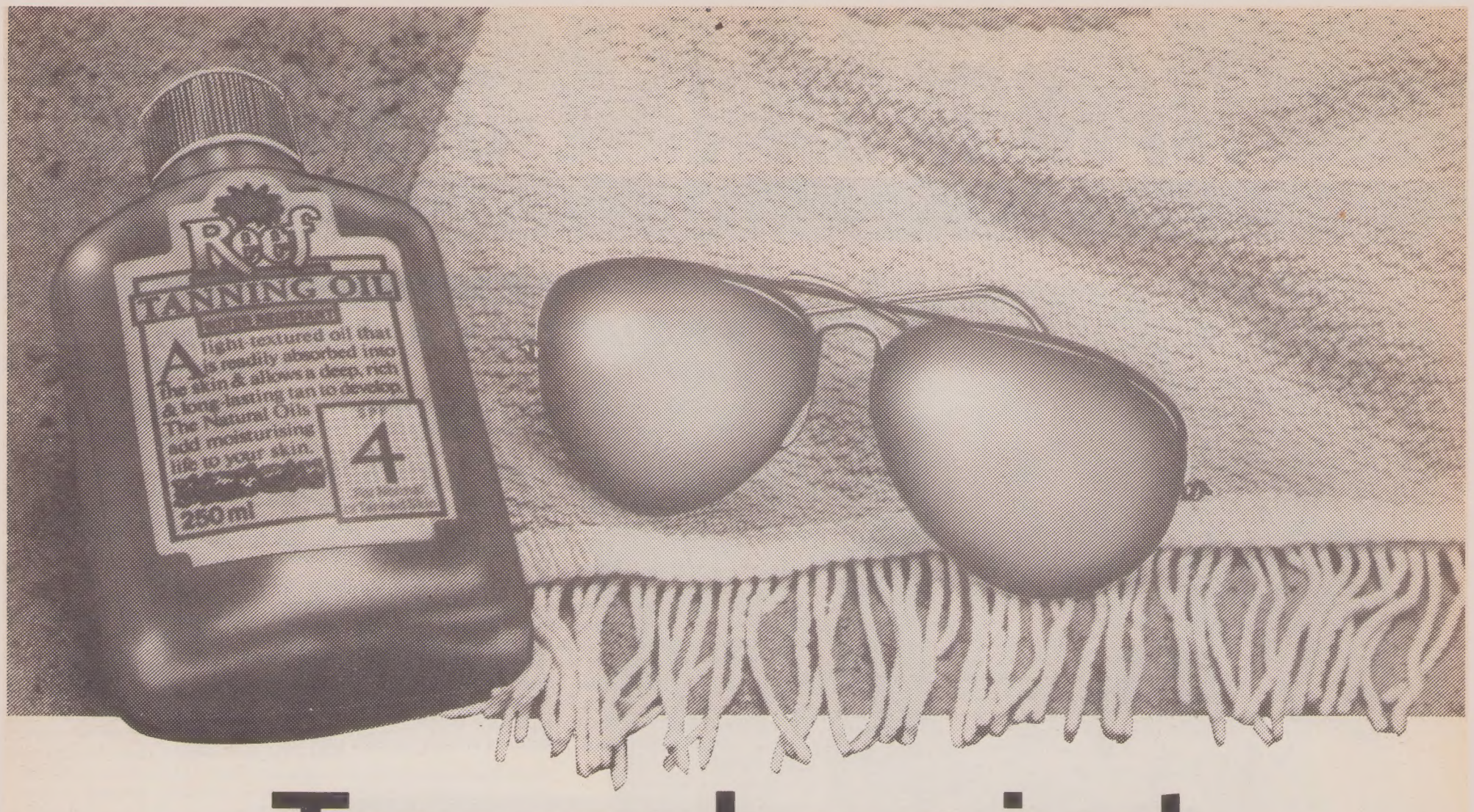
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SCRIBBLE

Vision Of Johanna

Johanna Pigott — "Anything but nine-to-five!"

SCRIBBLE? It just sounded good. I thought it would fit. It's sort of casual — it's not taking itself completely and utterly seriously. . ."

Which is not to say that the *Scribble* mini-album released this week is some bit of dilettante fluff. Seven subtle, melodic pieces with understated moods ranging from the wistful single, *Silly Girl*, to the vague menace of *Kaze* and *River*, it's one of the most pleasing records I've heard in months; it would be sad if the unfamiliar and self-deprecating 'band' name gets overlooked.

But Johanna Pigott doesn't want to know about being a chart junkie. This is her first solo release, yet she's had many opportunities to reflect on the creative/commercial equation. Last year she co-wrote a massive hit — Dragon's *Rain* — and a 20-part drama series for ABC-TV called *Sweet And Sour*, which revolves around young hopefuls in the music biz. Before that she played bass and sang in two Sydney bands that died trying to solve the problem; further back in time, she came up against it in the theatre world.

"I see people's hearts being broken all around the place because they want to make that good thing go on and on *and* give them a wage. And it just can't. Not unless the business, the situation, changes fundamentally."

Little in Johanna's early life hinted that she would be sitting in a Bondi flat considering the lot of a writer/performer. A schoolteacher's daughter growing up in the heart of Parramatta was expected to pursue education: "His vision was how to prepare yourself for a professional life in which you could be a useful human being. . . But there was all this other stuff, like art and music and performance, that didn't even exist in that context. Nobody did anything like that out there — as far as the eye could see, nobody!"

She drifted through school, passing the requisite exams but totally bored, and enrolled in architecture at Sydney University in 1972. "It was acceptable in the family sense. . . But I knew it was probably the place where I could get my small western suburbs brain blown apart and learn a bit more about what there was to do.

"And it happened that way!" She drops into a parody of the flat suburban whine. "It was blown, man!"

But not by blueprints and flying buttresses. The Architecture Faculty Revue introduced her to an older, stimulating set who were more interested in building theatre careers than office blocks. Johanna picked up a degree more or less by accident, and went out into the world with a theatre troupe.

"The most *obscure*, underground. . . failure! I don't know what we were doing, but we were definitely on the wrong track, 'cos we'd be doing pieces at, say, the Kirk Gallery, dragging in maybe ten people, while right out the front, thousands of people in purple Toranas would be roaring down Cleveland Street to see a rock show at the Hordern Pavilion!"

For the moment however, she and Bozar's writer, Tim Gooding, persisted with the theatre/film ambitions. Johanna studied at the Nimrod, Tim was writing things for television performers like Grahame 'Auntie Jack' Bond and Gary 'Norman Gunston' McDonald. Johanna graduated to bits on those shows, seasons in various productions. . . and decided that "the role of being an actress was just intolerable.

"We were sort of grumbling about it all on New Year's Eve of '77/'78, and we suddenly said, 'To hell with this shit — let's play!'"

This was the era in which anybody — look at Johnny Rotten! — could be in a band. A few months later musical beginners Johanna and Tim had acquired guitars, amplifiers, two slightly more experienced colleagues, and had started gigging as the XL Capris.

It was a band with enough good ideas to more than make up for the initial lack of expertise, and was soon working regularly. "Then it came to a point that I think happens a lot: where a thing that starts as a real rage and is funny has to decide whether it's going to change and become really serious and professional. And they're two different worlds."

A major catalyst was Todd Hunter, then in between Dragon's. Todd wanted to produce: he enticed the XLs into helping build a studio, and produced their first album, *Where Is Hank?* Then he joined the band on guitar.

"For Todd, bands were just things that you chopped and changed to make it the best it could be. For us it was this mysterious object that had come because four people had worked together. It got overbalanced: we went in the direction that Todd was suggesting, and it wasn't really the direction that Tim and I wanted to go. . .

"The first XLs was more like bandits making raids from the underside; the second was that other thing where you knuckle down and plan and try to make something that's going to work."

They made one more record — the fine and hugely overlooked *Weeds* — and gave it all away at the end of 1981. But Johanna and Todd still live together, work together.

The link with Tim Gooding also continued. After a spell in Sardine V ("I'd always loved the band, but I was filling in for them, doing a job really"), she started work on the *Sweet And Sour* project (Gooding having already got ABC approval for a story idea). "It was hard work, but I think it'll end up a good series. . ."

While writing about people trying to make their albums, Johanna was trying to make her own. "I actually started as soon as the XLs finished. 'Cos I was determined not to be completely at the mercy of engineers anymore; I'd learnt the live thing, the biggest thing I was lacking was knowledge of recording.

"So a lot of stuff on the record dates from then or even before. I just took the direction that I'd been heading in — a sort of *slower* thing.

"I s'pose it was a reaction to what I'd become frustrated with in the XLs — I got really tired of arguments about guitars and arrangements and *druuuuuuuuuuum soooooooooooounds!* When I started, I said 'For this bunch of songs I don't care about drums. . .' I reckon there's a big place for music like that, where the rhythm is there but it's not *beaten* out.

"This album has a beginning and an end, its own mood, but the music won't stay like that — I've already done stuff that's different. I'd like to have a band that can play every now and again, 'cos I'm dying to get back on stage. . . But not as a full-time thing. The XLs were totally consuming; after that I didn't want to get totally consumed again for a long time. I'm still not ready for that."

So how does one live? Johanna shrugs, laughs. "Since I left home I've lived on nothing, virtually. Writing this television stuff last year and getting some royalties for *Rain* is the first time I've earned any money."

That's ten years of hand-to-mouth while learning what you can do with ideals and what you can do with business. Some would say Johanna Pigott was doing alright (especially those yet to get an album deal, scriptwriting credits and a learn-as-you-go musical education); others, including perhaps the lady herself, would see it as no more than a likely sequence of doors that opened for an escaped Western Suburbanite.

"I was sitting on a train from Parramatta the other day, and I thought about all those years of catching trains. . . There must be some gravitational pull that works on people who want to live in the middle of town, and also on people who don't particularly like nine-to-five jobs.

"In every city there must be this group of people that gravitate to some centre and get involved in *anything* rather than work nine-to-five for someone else. There must be hundreds, thousands, *millions*. . .

"Anyway, I'm one of them."

GREG TAYLOR

A BOX OF FISH

Good Raw (Without Sauce)

ONE of the more curious recent Sydney phenomena is the upsurge of a bunch of young, noisy bands specialising in a strictly personal brand of white trash thrash.

These perspectives on the noise-making process range from the neo-tribal teutonic stomp of A Wrong Kind of Stone Age to the Lydia-Lunch-Meets-The-Scientists paroxysms of Zulu Rattle; from tattered punks Ragadoll to post-Velvets Flowerboy Blue . . . and A Box Of Fish.

Two years old, A Box Of Fish have been around longer than most of their peers — and it shows. Especially onstage. In front of an ever-changing backdrop of slides (mostly featuring the usual pretty pictures — war atrocites, Christian symbolism, dead bodies, although occasionally something more evocative like a splash of abstract colour) drummer Craig Rossi and bassist Bill Quarry maintain an ominous rhythm rumble, while guitarist Carol Anderson — black dress and a shock of flame-coloured hair — erects an impenetrable wall of sound, sometimes in unison with the rhythm section, sometimes completely at odds with it.

Skinny, tattooed frontman Andrew Johnson prowls among them, hiding behind the amps or the PA, crouching on the lip of the stage, turning his back to the audience, at times almost disappearing in the darkness whilst spitting lines of raw imagery into the microphone.

Relentless rhythms, thick dischords of distortion build up through hypnotic repetition into ragas of intense electric noise with titles like *Victim, Creatures* and *Erosion*.

The Box Of Fish story starts at the now defunct Entertainers' Club in Redfern. It was there in March 1982 that a duo called A Box Of Fish With Tartare Sauce (consisting of Bill on bass and drum machine with Andrew on Casio, guitar and vocals) first performed. They had absolutely no prior musical experience and had practised for a grand total of two weeks.

"It was just a joke, really," claims Bill. "But they asked us to come back, so we went back the next week."

"That's when I first saw them," recalls Carol. "I could see they couldn't play their instruments, but I thought they had *something*."

So with nine years of classical guitar plus a stint in ska outfit the Girlfriends behind her, Carol offered to teach the boys to play — and eventually ended up joining herself.

ANDREW: "People were a bit confused by us in the beginning. Because we had a drum machine, they thought we'd either be a pop band like the Machinations or a noise band like Severed Heads, but we weren't like either.

"We played with that lineup for a while, but the drum machine we had was very primitive and it limited us. It kept giving us trouble all the time, so we decided to get a real drummer."

Craig Rossi's enlistment was followed almost immediately by two dates with the Fall on their Australian tour. More recently, BOF have supported the Dead Kennedys and generally encountered much more success than they originally bargained for.

CAROL: "For us it was always a fun thing. I never thought that people would be interested in seeing us play live. But they seemed to like us, so we started taking it more seriously."

A dearth of BOF vinyl was relieved last month with the release of the single *Erosion/Sex Cat Killer* on Method Records, and two tracks — *Our Father* and *The Good, The Bad And The Ugly* — on Aberrant Records' Sydney punk compilation album, *Flowers From The Dustbin*.

Unfortunately, what distinguishes these tracks is their failure to come anywhere near capturing the atmosphere that A Box Of Fish are capable of generating onstage.

"Yeah, it's not that good," admits Bill. "That's mainly because we didn't know our way around a studio. We need a producer, but there's no producers around that I know of who could produce us. Plus we had to do five tracks in two days. We just took in tapes of bands that sounded something like what we wanted to sound like or of records where there were effects we wanted, but it didn't really come out very well."

What about getting saddled with the punk label as so often happens?

"Well we get a pretty wide cross-section of people coming to see us, not just punks. I see us much more as an *extension* of punk. Being slotted into the punk category has happened because we appeared on the compilation album. Then again, I'd rather be categorised as punk than a lot of other things I could think of."

So what happens to Box Of Fish next?

"We'd like to go to Melbourne for a tour," says Carol. "But we'll probably never afford it. We're going to do another record — a twelve-inch single — and then we'd also like to make a video."

Modest enough ambitions. Lately, A Box Of Fish have been enjoying the rewards of cult success. Their single has just about completely sold out, as has the compilation album they appeared on. Their live appearances are always well attended — when they supported Real Life recently at the Sydney Trade Union Club, they drew more people than the headliners. Influential London DJ John Peel has been playing the single on his radio programme, and *Sounds* magazine has sent over requesting more information.

So how does Carol feel about all these signs of success? She laughs so hard she nearly spills her coffee, and turns red.

"Well, really. . . I reckon it's embarrassing."

FRANK BRUNETTI

A Box Of Fish — Craig, Bill, Andrew, Carol (Pic: Francine McDougall)

THE PRETENDERS

LEARNING TO CRAWL

The third and most anticipated Pretenders album has arrived

Following their 'live' appearances at Narara and in Melbourne is the new single release 'Middle Of The Road'

LEARNING TO CRAWL
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QED

Inescapable Conclusions

I WAS first made aware of Jenny Morris' voice one afternoon 15 months ago. She shared a house with a singer I was doing a story on, and as a group of us downstairs watched TV and gossiped, Jenny (upstairs) was rehearsing some musicians. Fragments of vocal and occasional barked instructions formed a sound collage with the wildlife doco's score and dominant strands of conversation. Her voice was striking; I tried to tune out the interference, all the while resisting an impulse to wheel on the room at large, frowning *'SSSHH!! I wanna eavesdrop on Jenny!'*

Originality plus intelligence plus technical skill is a killer combination, and hearing a band who have it all is a cause for real excitement: vascular flush, dilated pupils . . . the works! QED are Jenny Morris' band, and they fit the above prescription. Basically conceived as pop (comparatively complex, a few cuts above the average), their style is Jenny; she dominates her territory — the stage — convincingly. Apart from the fact that she moves well and that voice is outstanding (strong, with depth, and though flexible, controlled), she imparts character to the band: forthright (a relief from the effete), bristling independence, but perhaps just missing that inspired wild edge. Instead of celebratory exuberance, there's an underlying sense of gritted teeth and knitted brow; while this may not be tissue-soft, commercially-contrived pop, it *is* carefully (verging on cautiously) structured and played.

Previously Jenny sang with the Crocodiles. They had a hit with *Tears* and won several awards in their homeland New Zealand, but within four months of arriving in Australia, split. Moving Pictures' manager Rick Sutton and producer Charles Fisher were impressed by Jenny's potential, however, and arranged for her to record six songs at Trafalgar Studios, backed by session musicians. The immediate outcome was the single *Little By Little* released in mid-'83; as a result of Jenny's working with guitarist Rex Goh (a veteran of Air Supply and Leon Berger's band), the longterm outcome was QED.

Rex rang Jenny some months later and proposed the musical equivalent of marriage — those fateful words. 'Let's form a band'. He suggested as co-commitants drummer Shane Flew, bassist Ian Belton and keyboard-player Andy Burns, who "weren't actually friends; they were just people we'd heard were, um . . . out of work. Or were looking for something other than gigs that pay money."

The calmly hard-nosed tone is typical. Compact, with honey-coloured eyes and black hair, Jenny has a way of referring to the less glamorous aspects of rock 'n' roll in an indifferent manner, entirely matter-of-fact.

And there were certainly things the matter with some of the facts, tonight. The fact that the power cut out mid-set, for instance, leaving Shane to bridge the silence with an extended drum solo. The fact that Jenny's mike did some strange gymnastics with dead echo. The fact, too, that no venue she's worked in yet has had separate changing rooms for women and men; this, she protests flatly, in spite of yet another fact — that there's a goodly number of female performers active in the scene these days. Rather than use the official dressing-room and change in front of the headlining band (strangers, but — had she known — devout Christians who would have been more embarrassed than she), Jenny has resorted to a furtive strip in the backstage men's toilets.

A draining evening. The excitement I'd felt watching QED on stage was quickly ironed out by the low-key aftermath, the claustrophobic tedium of backstage. *However* . . . having turned the taperecorder on, I asked her why, if *she* were a punter poring over the gig guide, she'd choose to see QED over the alternatives. She says she probably *wouldn't*. Jenny being QED's sole songwriter (sometimes collaborating with Vulgar Beatman Tony Backhouse), this may be modesty talking. What she *does* like about QED is that "there's a lot of light and shadow in our set. I think it's really important to have highs and lows, rather than just straight, full-on *bash* — which some of the things Rex plays sometimes come quite close to being . . .

"What we do is interesting. When you play the same songs five nights a week they've *got* to be interesting. If they're not you'd give up, or you wouldn't play well. To *keep* it interesting, we change our songs around a lot; since we started playing seven months ago we've changed feels and arrangements maybe three times."

Jenny Morris remembers that rock'n'roll is forever (Pic: Ian Greene)

The debut single *Everywhere I Go* is one of the songs co-written with Tony. It's doing well. "When I went back to New Zealand for Christmas," Jenny tells me, "we were getting a tepid reaction to the single, but when I came back it was just crazy. The reaction, live, has changed a helluva lot. It always was okay; people would always stand there really *looking*, you know? They look like they're watching a play or something. But anyway, now they'll sort of hootenanny and yell, as well.

"It's really good," she adds, her voice so enervated it all but belies the words. "I'm really pleased, actually."

I decide she's tired. The interview drifts into backwaters, and finally washes aground with Jenny telling me how hopeless it is for a would-be theatregoer to work irregularly at nights in a rock band. Advance bookings are just not on.

"Rock'n'roll is a *horrible* profession," she remarks, not quite morosely. Rather, with a kind of grim-jawed, trooper's resignation, something akin (I imagine) to the tone of that apocryphal US president when he uttered the immortal line, "He may be a sonofabitch, but at least he's *our sonofabitch*. . ."

ELLY McDONALD

STRANGE TENANTS

"The Midnight Oil's Of Oz Ska"

ACTUALLY, there were quite a lot of steps to be taken — six flights, if I remember rightly. I guess that long, hard climb is what endears the Trade Union Club to so many people. Anyway, I found the band, and more importantly, four flights back down, the bar, and a better atmosphere in which to speak to Strange Tenants' vocalist, Bruce Hearn.

For the next month or two, Strange Tenants will be traipsing their way up and down the East Coast, touring to promote their new EP, *Take One Step*. It's their third release. An earlier EP and a single in June last year account for the balance.

They formed in Melbourne in 1981, when the two Hearn brothers (Ian and Bruce), influenced by the British ska revival of the late seventies, advertised in a national music newspaper for people interested in forming a ska-orientated band. At the time, there was no Melbourne 'ska scene', so finding interested parties wasn't easy. However, a "motley group" of people rang up and rehearsals began, followed soon after by local gigs.

"We couldn't agree on a name, and had a long list. We ended up having a secret ballot, marking them off from 1 to 20, and I think Strange Tenants was everybody's fifth choice."

From the start, they had problems with understanding and acceptance.

"Unfortunately in Australia the only well-known ska band is Madness (*the Allniters play heavy metal? — Ed)* — so people have a certain image that all ska music is nursery-rhyme-nutty. A lot of people think that as a ska band, you've got to be crazy all the time. We like to take the music seriously. We spend time looking for areas to develop into.

"We never wanted to just be a ska band. We liked it because it's such great dance music, and we were very impressed by the politics of a lot of the music too — it was expressing a working class outlook on life which appealed to us. My brother and I in particular come from a family that's been involved in working class politics, and we're very strong socialists. But we felt that once we got into music, we wouldn't necessarily always have to express that through ska — there'd be other forms of music." (The present set contains a mixture of ska, reggae, calypso, and there's even a rockabilly number.)

The Tenants set up Blue Beat, their own record label, and have since signed a distribution deal with EMI. This has posed financial problems; they have to pay for the recording, pressing, and promotion of their product themselves, and to do so, they have a very heavy live schedule. At the moment, they don't make a profit on their records, and hope to have a moderately successful single before they record an album — a project they hope to begin within the first half of this year.

A major problem for any ska band in this country is that we have no history of such music, apart from the Allniters. As such, recording techniques are ill-informed on the subject.

"We haven't found a sympathetic producer yet — that's a problem. With our last single, *Hard Times*, we got an English producer to do it — Peter Williams. We produced the latest EP by ourselves because we felt we didn't know anyone we thought could do the job properly. We felt that the people who wrote the songs would have a better idea of them than anyone else, so they produced them. Personally, I think it's the best-produced record that we've put out so far

"We make a deliberate effort to try and reproduce our live sound. There's a great sense of achievement in spending hours in the studio trying to make songs sound better and better. Unlike other bands, we record the same way as we play live, very rarely adding other instruments. In the end, the recorded sound is simply a polished version of what we sound like live."

As with all ska bands, a lot hinges on live performance ability. The *Take One Step* tour has been successful so far, and the footholds outside Melbourne are growing stronger. In fact, they're worried that they may have left Melbourne a little behind because of their gradual acceptance elsewhere and subsequent touring.

In this country, ska has no singular identity. Each of the major bands has developed a different approach to their music. With their concerned commitment to the social and political factors that have inspired (or depressed) them, Strange Tenants would have to admit that their approach is the most serious. There is, however, a strain of dry humour that runs through much of their work, as evident in songs such as *Something Like That*.

This sense of lyrical emphasis, a lack of hype, constant touring and an ongoing commitment has led to interesting comparisons with bands outside their genre.

"Someone once wrote about us that we are the 'Midnight Oil's of Australian ska'," laughs Bruce. It's probably a close approximation — I don't know whether that's good or bad."

JON CASIMIR

Is this ska-frisbee or what?

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FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS & GUESTS.

DARYL the DUTIFUL

On the eve of their Oz tour, TERRY BYRNES gets a thoroughly professional call from HALL & OATES.

(Thinks) "Soon I will have to take off a few jackets, collect that little guy with the moustache and go and work my butt off in Australia. Again. It's great, I guess. . . (Pic: US/MP/LFI)

HALL & OATES are the finest finest exponents of "blue eyed soul" this side of Van Morrison.

In the pop format, mind you. Hall & Oates have refined the art of writing singles to the point where their songs possess the effortless glide of silken authority so essential to AM/FM crossover music. It's a seamless, highly polished sound, stopping just short of the homogenised banality of Air Supply, leaning a little towards the Motown school of sinuous rhythm, adding the intimacy of a Charlie De Chant sax line for atmosphere, and wrapping the whole groove around cool-is-hot vocals.

RCA think so much of this approach that they've licenced K-Tel (those masters of re-packaging and sale and return TV advertising) to push Hall & Oates' Greatest Hits, *Rock And Soul Part One*. Given their third Oz tour in as many years, a couple of new tracks *(Say It Isn't So* and *Adult Education*, plus a live version of *Wait For Me)*, the album is as sure as eggs and bacon, or Hall & Oates, or Giving The Public What They Want When You Decide It's Time They Want It.

On the telephone, Daryl Hall is pleasantly detached. Unfalteringly straightforward, handling most questions with a succinct adroitness that is neat and tidy without ever revealing how he feels underneath the layers of professional ease. In the context of a fifteen-minute conversation, I call it politeness; Darryl Hall probably calls it doing his duty

What is on the Hall & Oates agenda for '84?

"A world tour starting in Australia, going on to Japan, Europe, ending up in Germany; then we go back into the studio, probably in May, and get an album out in July or August."

Why only three dates on your Australia tour?

"The tour was booked to start in Japan, and there were only certain dates we could get because we're playing the Budokan" *(Hall & Oates are HUGE in Japan — in 1983, they were voted best group),* "and unfortunately we couldn't work the dates out so we could do a longer tour of Australia. I'm kind of disappointed about that, because I enjoy coming to Australia. And I like to have a bit of extra time off so I can see your country, rather than have to play and leave immediately."

Your last tour here essentially featured your greatest hits. What can the public expect this time around?

"Last time around was mainly from *Private Eyes;* now we're going to be playing H20 material, and some new songs on the *Rock And Soul* album we just put out — and it will be different just because of that. We've been doing some new things. We've decided to stretch the songs a bit in arrangement. The show in general is different than it was last time."

'Say It Isn't So' and 'Adult Education', the two tracks you recorded with Bob Clearmountain last September indicate a heavier, more rhythmic approach — in fact denser sound all round. Is this indicative of a new direction in your writing?

"Working with Bob Clearmountain gave us a slightly different sound, because whenever you work with a different engineer, he has different sound ideas. And so, yes, Bob definitely influenced it a bit that way As far as the heavier beat — I think that is the direction we're going. I like what's happening in New York as far as dance music goes. I think it's one of the most creative things happening in the world right now, musically. It's a very kind of an open-ended thing — as long as you have the beat, you're pretty free to do whatever you want on top of it.

"While I think we're moving a little in the direction of dance music, we never embrace anything altogether. It's an influence. That's part of urban music in general — having a strong dance beat."

Why did you choose to work with Bob Clearmountain?

"I think he's the best, at least in the eastern half of the United States. He's fantastically quick, and he gets the best sounds. I've been an admirer of his engineering for a long time, and I'm glad we finally got a chance to get together — I think we're going to continue to work together."

Where do you see Hall & Oates in five years' time?

"Things can change very quickly. The only thing I can say for sure is that I'm going to be making music. I don't know in what form, whether it's going to be popular or unpopular. It's what I do, and what I enjoy the most."

Given 'Rock And Soul' is your Greatest Hits collection, is there any one song that you feel sums up Hall & Oates; is, if you like, your signature tune?

"Good question. No, I don't. I think what we do is too complex to be summed up by one song. We have certain elements which we use all the time, but within that there's a lot of variation. There's a big difference between an *Adult Education* and a *She's Gone.* It's not just the time gap, either. It's just that within our style there is a lot of variation."

How important are video clips to you?

"What we try and do with our videos is depict the mood of the song and the inner or greater meaning — the general meaning of the song. We're not trying to make great B movies. It's very tied into depicting the music. I think, in America, video has become — like anything that becomes popular — a little overblown and out of proportion to what it really is.

'I try and use my body and face to describe what I'm saying in the song I think that's where video helps us — where people can understand the songs a little better by seeing us perform them, seeing close-ups of our eyes and faces and things like that."

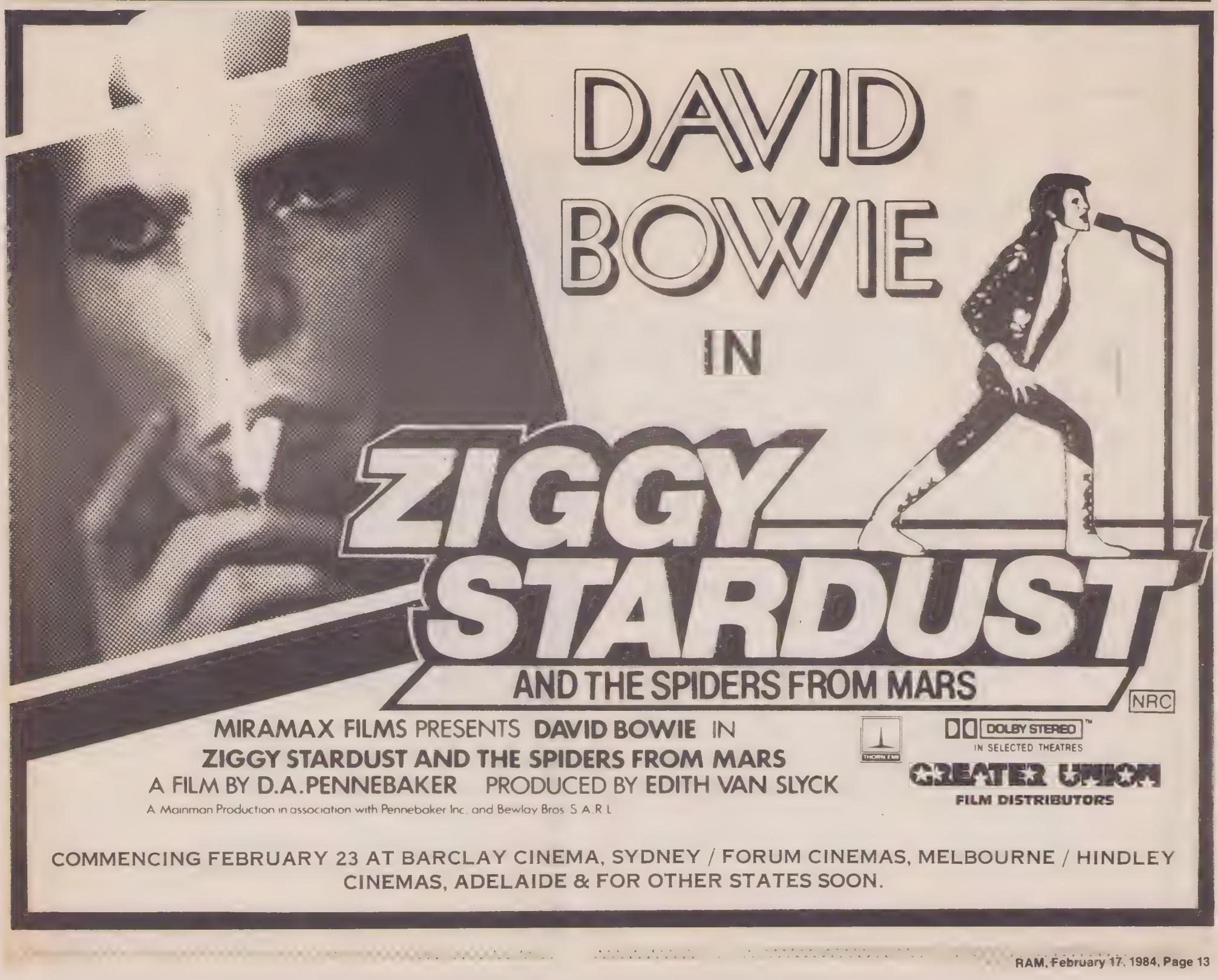
How do you personally approach the making of a Hall & Oates video?

"We talk to the director and hopefully have a rapport with him. We try and talk about what the song is really about. Our songs generally have different levels of meaning — from the most superficial to much deeper things — so we try and touch on the deeper thing through mood, colour, movement, so that as you look at it, it makes you want to listen again rather than distract you. I think a lot of videos detract from the music. I'd like to refer the watcher back into the music all the time."

How do you prepare yourself to sing songs like 'Sara Smiles' or 'Kiss On My List' again and again — as if it were for the first time?

"It's a kind of hard process to describe. We keep ourselves interested on stage by doing little subtle things with the arrangements and stuff. Only we would know about it. When I sing, my vocal style is a very free kind of a style. I don't stick to a regular melody, so that over a tour the melody and arrangement constantly evolves and changes. That's what keeps it interesting."

TERRY BYRNES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SLOWLY

Alex pushs denim beyond endurance

ELLY McDONALD braves a rainy Olympics Benefit to find out how the success story of 1982 is handling a becalmed career.

ALL afternoon, rain alternates with drizzle. The crowd shields itself beneath a panoply of umbrellas, spear-tips protrude through an array of colours, and it looks like an army assembled on a battlefield, phalanx formations bearing heraldic arms.

Some people sport makeshift garbage-bag raincoats. Behind the mixer, two young girls slip over in the swill underfoot. They lie there in the mud and each other's arms, giggling, for a full ten minutes. Backstage, Alex Smith is reaching for a roll of gaffer-tape, intending (like the ballerina who dips her points in resin) to minimise the risk of backflipping on a slippery stage. He hears the DJ announce: "Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together and welcome MOVING PICTURES!" He hears the crowd roar — then silence. The gear isn't set up yet. A tape of Midnight Oil booms out against the sky, and Alex laughs. "Hey! That's the tightest we've played in years! We sound real *contemporary*. . ."

The occasion is the 2SM/Channel 10 Brookvale Oval concert in Sydney, all proceeds going towards the Olympic team's expenses. QED, Machinations and the Allniters have performed already; Moving Pictures are next, preceding headliners Australian Crawl. It's rumoured Dragon were originally scheduled, but backed out after insisting, to no avail, on second billing.

"I can't understand that," frowns Alex. "*We* wouldn't have minded going on before *them*."

Number of units sold, drawing power, visibility. . . such is the stuff of backstage politics. Moving Pictures profess to be unconcerned by (and as far as possible, uninvolved in) the wheeling and dealing, the industry intrigue. And maybe that's as well, because their last few singles have not charted strongly, and the recently released *Matinee* LP stalled just short of gold; slightly over 30,000 copies sold, as against the 200,000-plus notched up by their debut album, *Days Of Innocence*.

Admittedly, sales for local albums generally were a lot healthier two years ago, but on Christmas Eve at the Manly Vale Hotel — right in the heart of Moving Pictures territory — the band only drew 300 punters. Whereas previously, they always pulled crowds even when they *didn't* have product to promote.

The band themselves say they're not overly disturbed, but this month, for the first time, they're insisting their manager cancel several contracted gigs. They need a break. There's no point busting their guts when clearly *Matinee* is not a happening album; they accept that, at least temporarily, the band has lost momentum.

To those who believe music has a sacred duty to be progressive, to challenge — or at worst, to be *fashionably* nostalgic — Moving Pictures have never been hip. R&B-derived traditionalists, they're a band guilty of what one critic damningly calls "corny populism" — the opposite of elitism. Their appeal is to the 'little people', by which I mean less the under-14s (though definitely their market inclines that way) than the 'little people' referred to in their No. 1 single of early '82, *What About Me?*. . . the battlers, those who so lack confidence, they don't even acknowledge their own aspirations — the mediocre, trapped in the mundane. Moving Pictures represent over-the-top optimism, and as such are lyrically simplistic because (as saxophonist Andy Thompson says) "simple things happen to most people."

Not fashionable. It's not difficult to gag on the romanticism, on the overblown nature of their 'vision', fraught as it is with the more blatant elements of rock'n'roll mythology. Still, the writer of *What About Me?*, guitarist Garry Frost, has a point when he says too many people "seem to think of Moving Pictures as Alex Smith. That's the sad part. Alex may be the 'spokesman' for the band, but he doesn't always speak *for* the band; there's a lot of things Alex does or says that we don't necessarily agree with, or abide by." So what are these *others* on about? — and who are they, anyway?

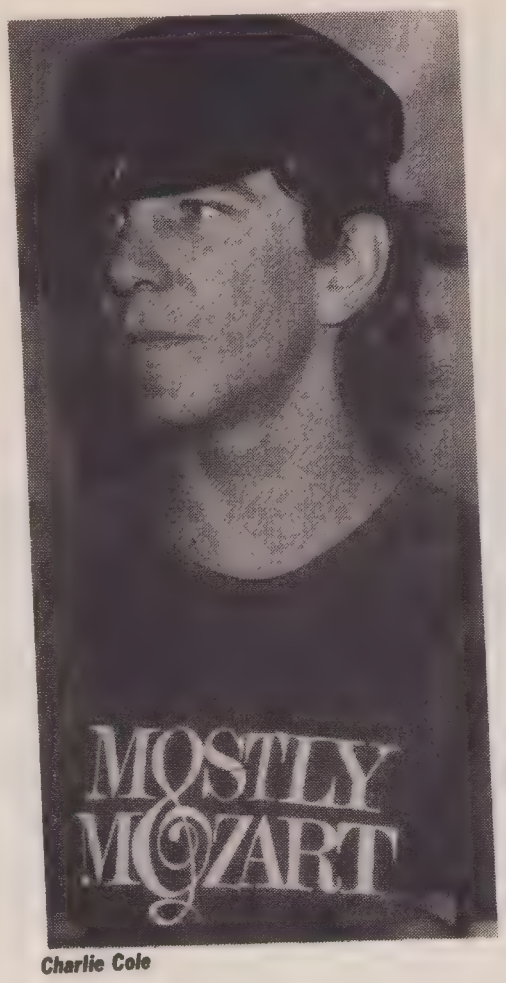
Let's start with Charlie Cole. Charlie plays keyboards, and sometimes he plays trumpet. He writes songs — lots of them — but because "some people push harder than others", only one that's all his own has ever made it to vinyl. It's called *Marianne*, and he'll admit, abashed, that it's autobiographical: *Boy sees girl onstage, up in the spotlight; boy falls in love with girl-on-stage; boy is cruelly used*. Sound familiar?

Charlie was born in New York. His father was a chemical engineer assigned to a stint downunder by a big U.S. company. He liked the place, and stayed; Charlie was six at the time. Growing up in Avalon, he was sent to the exclusive boys' school Cranbrook, where he received a classical music training and became involved in orchestras and choirs. By ten, he had taken up the trumpet, because he "used to love Herb Alpert — but ten-year-olds are like that. . ."

At 25, he retains a naive quality. Loose-limbed, lanky, he's affable and shy. His experiences with Moving Pictures — only the second professional band he's played in — have been "fantastic.. They're really nice people, which is amazing, because there are not that many really nice people in this industry. Or at least, not that I've come across."

After the Brookvale show, Charlie immediately heads for his gear-bag, left in the backstage tent: "Straight off stage and straight into a book!" someone nearby laughs, with a snort pitched somewhere between affection and disgust. The book is Clive James' *Unreliable Memoirs*, which I quickly ascertain Charlie is reading not because he realises how trendy (or indeed, *who*) Clive James is, but because he just happened across it.

"Do you know this girl called Carson McCullers?" he asks me, all innocent enthusiasm. "I'm reading a lot of her at the moment, and she's *great*. . ."



Charlie Cole

Then there's Garry Frost. Garry comes across as ambitious, the kind of person who makes demands on himself and could feel let down if life doesn't live up to the effort he puts into it. A self-taught musician, he comes from a large family and spent several years working with deaf and blind, then autistic, children after graduating in Science with a psychology major.

Now 27, he's a perfectionist, working up to 16 hours a day in the studio. Because Moving Pictures' producer Charles Fisher is not the kind of producer who doubles as both sound specialist *and* artistic advisor, the responsibility for arranging material to maximum advantage is largely Garry's. At home, he has a four-track and a JPY Roland synth: it keeps him happy.

Garry composes on keyboards in preference to guitar, and always writes from personal experience. And then he re-writes. Most songs are re-written over a period of months, and as a marathon creation, *What About Me?* could have challenged 'Blue Hills'. He pares the lyrics down to their least complex form, believing that the more he edits the 'poetry' out, the closer he'll come to "general acceptance".

To an outsider, guessing, there seems a fair amount of resentment in Garry. He wrote *What About Me?* as a personal protest, because "I was just sick to death of getting kicked around." And this was *before* the press, in his view, made Moving Pictures their chosen whipping-boy! Originally, *What About Me?* wasn't going to be recorded at all, and the relative sparsity of Frost material as opposed to Smith credits is plainly a bone of contention. As for *Matinee*, Garry is not altogether satisfied. Although he contends that neglected album tracks *Sisters Of Mercy* and *Goldrush* will one day be recognised as classics, he is bitterly disappointed in *Where They Belong*, which failed as a single. The original demo-tape caught the song's essence incomparably better, he believes.

According to Garry, *Matinee* "reflects a lot of indecision. In the past twelve months, we as a band tended to lose our identity in the marketing. . ."

Do you feel you've been misrepresented?

"I feel we've been *slandered*," he retorts, unsmiling.

Ian Lees, on the other hand, is an easy-going soul — good-humoured and open. He hasn't even *thought* about criticisms of the band; all he knows is "When I play, I feel *really good*." Like Garry, he's a Hornsby lad from a working-class family, and his is the classic rock'n'roller's tale: "When I was a kid I was interested in sport. I wanted the fastest billy-cart, motor-bike. . . then one day, a friend of mine got a guitar."

He was 15 years old, and his mate had a brother who played in a band. They blew him away. The lights the equipment the image the NOISE!!! "Then I sort of started playing 'cos a friend said, *'Get a bass or I'll bash ya'*, and I thought it was easier to get a bass. . ."

Ian played in school bands, but because he believed one should find *real work*, after leaving school he trained as a draughtsman and spent six apathetic years at an honest trade. "Then, about four years ago, I was with an outfit and they said 'Look, we're gonna be big time — you've got to leave your job.' So I left my job, and two weeks later they split up."

The band were called This Side Up.

MOVING PICTURES

and their singer was Alex Smith. In the short period before he and Alex re-teamed in Moving Pictures, Ian took on casual jobs playing jazz. "My father used to play jazz, a real lot of jazz," he says, explaining how he taught himself bass. "The best way to play jazz is to listen to a lot."

The most recent band member, Artful Dodger lookalike Mar k Meyer, had a more extensive musical education. A native of Adelaide, he had free music tuition at State school, and studied violin from the age of seven: "I played first violin in the combined school orchestra when I was 12 — and I didn't even know what first violin *was!*"

At secondary level he was referred to tough Norwood Boys' Tech, because the music master there — a man named Eric Bryce — was a professional music arranger for the ABC and various jazz big bands. Mark became his protege, and took up the drums on his recommendation. In no time he was hooked, and though he also dearly loved football. "I busted a few bones and had to miss out on a few gigs because of it, so football *went*."

On leaving school at 16, Mark became a buyer for a men's wear boutique. Later he worked as a sales rep for EMI Records All the while, he played gigs after hours and wagged afternoons to play sessions by day — during this time he averaged three or four hours' sleep each night. In search of more session work, he headed to Melbourne in '78, and promptly landed a gig with Stylus — then enjoying some success. On Stylus' demise he moved on to Mark Gillespie, Marcia Hines, Jon English, Richard Clapton. . . and more. A drummer in demand

When Paul Freeland left the band in mid '82, Charles Fisher suggested Mark to Moving Pictures; *Winners* was released to 'announce' the lineup change. Mark is adamant he's always been motivated by enjoyment, not ambition, and as long as the band earn enough to continue he's not unduly worried by shifts in their fortunes. Certainly, words don't hurt him.

"Funnily enough, as much flak as we get from the media, amongst musical circles the guys are really respected," he points out. "They've been playing 10, 15 years and they know what they're doing. You get called some things that maybe some of us are sometimes uspet by, but mostly we just laugh, because to be quite honest, I know that 90% of the time those people who are writing things about us are not qualified to write anything about *anybody*. A lot of them don't really understand music.

"But Al, especially, gets a real drubbing. The guy is the most enthusiastic singer I've ever met, probably the most enthusiastic performer, and despite what people think, perhaps the most honest. He's hyperactive — he'd run a two-minute mile! You can't stop him, and you know, we don't *want* to stop him. Because he really means it."

Andrew Thompson has known Alex longer than any of them. Born in Bathurst, he moved to Sydney's Kuringai area quite young and met Alex at school. By first-form high school, they'd formed their first band. Andy grew up musical in a musical environment, what with elder brothers who played guitar and a father who not only played guitar but also sang (live, on wartime radio), and who was "always playing me things, bringing different things for me to listen to whether he liked them himself or not. I was always encouraged. From the age of eight, I started playing clarinet." Soon the sax became his primary instrument, an attractive choice because (as Alex appreciates) it's the closest in timbre to the human voice.

Andy "dug ditches, pumped petrol, and worked in advertising for a year", but by 17 he could pay his way through music. Before co-founding Moving Pictures an unbelievably mere 3½ years ago, Andy played with the Layabouts, with the Dave Nesbitt Band, innumerable pick-up combos, and in the Bilgola Bop Band with Alex.

"It's a positive vibe," he considers, when asked what Moving Pictures have to offer. "We talk to a lot of people, and they don't see that within themselves they've got what it takes to get out from under whatever it is makes them feel trapped. They get told so often they're a lump of shit they start to believe it. We're trying to say 'YOU'VE GOT IT! YOU'RE A PERSON! YOU *CAN* DO SOMETHING!' And we *believe* that."

Bassist Ian Lees props up Mark Meyer

The high point of Moving Pictures' year was the five-date tour of Japan last October, playing 2,000-seaters and doing huge amounts of press. *Days of Innocence* sold 20,000 copies in Japan (which, as a market for western music, is no bigger than Australia — best-sellers like Bowie and the Police do maybe 120,000), so everyone at the shows sang along: *'Yoni and the Lomeo'*, cheerfully mass-parroted.

A short U.S. promo tour was also chalked up, and while in the States, the band recorded a non-original number for the soundtrack to Herbert Ross' film *Footloose.*

On the debit side, they themselves paid for an abortive eight weeks' recording done in Sydney last January with American producer Don Gamin. Gamin had just had a U.S. No. 1 hit with his first major release, John Cougar Mellencamp's *American Fool* LP and its single, *Jack And Diane;* he, much more than Moving Pictures, felt a need to consolidate career-wise with a followup smash hit. The resultant (shelved) tapes were an expensive false start to the *Matinee* project.

And further setbacks beset the band: Gamin had been recommended by Elektra, the major which distributed *Days Of Innocence* stateside. But Elektra closed its West Coast operation, sacking the lion's share of its staff — among them those who were most enthused by Moving Pictures, helping promote the single to the #19 Billboard slot. In future product will be distributed O.S. through Geffen.

Big business. Politics, again, and Moving Pictures maintain they neither know nor wish to know too much about these things.

"You know," says Alex, "Two years ago we recorded a song that originally wasn't even going to be on the album. We released it, did it once on TV, and three days later we were 'Big Stars'. Immediately, all kinds of praise and all kinds of shit were heaped on us. All we ever wanted to say was 'Please just shut up, and *listen to the music.*"

And with that, he heads in the direction of the party, ignoring the rain still sulking over a sodden world outside.

"He's gonna split 'em right up the crutch fer sure this time," think Andy and Garry (All pix: Ian Greene)

TIM & DEBBIE

Brainspeakspace

Comedy Curator PAT SHEIL views two major Exhibitions-Of-Themselves.

TIM AND DEBBIE are, at first glance, two new comedy characters on Australian television. Like many others, they have emerged from small, inner-city cabaret/theatre restaurant shows, moved on to the comedy clearing house of ABC radio, and are now well-known TV faces.

"Who's that?"

"Oh, that's Tim and Debbie. . ."

But Tim and Debbie are more interesting than that. They appear at a fascinating time in the history of Australian comedy. Standards having been set, for better or for worse, by Aunty Jack, Hogan, and Gunston, and with Daryl Somers sinking into the role of Don Lane's heir apparent, there is something of a void when it comes to TV laughs at present.

And yet Austen Tayshus has shown beyond all doubt that the Australian audience wants to laugh as much as they ever did. It's time for the next round, and Tim and Debbie are two of the main contenders. Pushing an endearing idiocy that cuts a little closer than Gunston's symphony of the pathetic, and not nearly as formularised as Hogan, they are the most interesting Oz laugh around. With their album, Brainspace Vol II *selling well, and work on the second series of* Australia You're Standing In It *about to begin, Tim and Debbie's creators Mary Keneally and Stephen Blackburn took time off to show Pat Sheil just how supportive they can be when another writer wants to do an excellent story. . .*

TIM AND DEBBIE are absorbent. They're a cultural Wettex. Wipe it lightly across the veneer of jargon that clads the concerns of Australia's partially informed, and you accumulate a gritty morass of slogans, throwaway causes and heartfelt enthusiasms. Wring it out, and you've got Tim and Debbie's vital juices, the guff of which *amazing flashes* and *things-to-be-on-about* are made. Tim and Debbie are real. There are Tims and Debbies everywhere.

Mary Keneally and Stephen Blackburn have been wiping the Tim and Debbie Wettex across the vocabularies of really-aware-young-people for at least four years, and the gooey unction that they've wrung from it is the fuel that powers one of Australia's most successful satirical comedy routines. A pair of ideological dabblers, short on gorm but long in *life energies*, Tim and Debbie have enthused their way onto the stage, radio, television, the cover of *The National Times*. Sharing a kind of stereo non-mind, they have succeeded despite themselves, despite the fact that they're the sort of people you'd emigrate to avoid. You can't look away; it's like a cerebral traffic accident. The English language writhes in the twisted wreckage of their blathering monologue and you look on, fascinated.

Where did they come from? While the characters are the creation of Mary and Stephen, the real Tims and Debbies have to get some of the credit. Everyone's met them: they corner you at parties, they go to Art School part-time, they once read a Socialist pamphlet. Whatever it is they're on about, they *really* mean it. They're horrible.

On my way to the interview, I try to build up a picture of Tim and Debbie's lives. From the record, the radio, the quotes, the TV, a hazy and sometimes frightening picture emerges of the frantic but intellectually tenuous chain of occurrences that Tim and Debbie call Existence. It is full of characters like Barry, the really supportive con man; Helga, who seems to stand for everything complicated and sexual when it comes to relating with anybody; a communal-type household that never gets cleaned because it's always someone else's turn; and, washing over all of it, the irreparably flawed reggae of the rooM klearerS, the band Tim is failing to manage very well and whose "heavy political statement" screams up the corridor from the garage, pushed by the tortured bleatings of the Women Who Want To Play Saxophone Collective.

Tim and Debbie. . . I see them arguing in the ruins of the kitchen over whether it's more important to spend the rent money on paying Barry the $200 they always owe him for the Open Ended Series of Bush Workshops, or the money Tim somehow owes the local pub for not getting two hundred people to last night's rooM klearerS' gig. So important are these issues —such *utterly excellent* causes! — that they pay scant attention to the eviction notice on the noticeboard behind them.

The noticeboard (or would they call it an 'information interface'?) is covered with notes to and from other members of the household disclaiming any responsibility for last week's dishes and the enormous pile of junk in the backyard. As Debbie sits and wonders how long it would take to learn saxophone, Tim walks to the door and lets in a couple of rooM klearerS. They dump a broken-down PA in the corridor and walk out, yelling something about how it's time Tim got his act together and found them some decent gigs. . .

EEEAAAAGGHH! Where are these nightmares coming from? Partly from the minds of Mary and Stephen, who make it clear that Tim and Debbie would *have* to live in something like this, and partly from my own memories of collapsing households, pubs attacked by incompetent reggae bands, and really sensitive, caring people boring your socks off. But, just like *Monty Python* hacking people's limbs off, it's so awful it's funny.

WHEN I actually get to meet Mary and Stephen, it's a distressing experience. So unlike Tim and Debbie are they that it's like being told you're going to interview Godzilla and then being confronted by the guy without his rubber suit. Where are the trend-leaping twits I came to see? These two are intelligent, well-spoken human beings! The sort of people you'd happily go to lunch with. . .

I'm soon relieved that it *isn't* Tim and Debbie I'm talking to. They, I'm sure, don't know nearly as much about Tim and Debbie as Mary and Stephen do. Mary and Stephen care about Tim and Debbie, they understand them. (Tim and Debbie only understand that they should be on about something at all times.)

MARY: "They're trying so hard to impress, and they're so ignorant, and they think they know just everything. . . I really like them!"

Tim and Debbie didn't just appear in the Mary and Stephen brainspace. They're just the most recent and best known symptom of Keneally/Blackburn Syndrome, a virulent theatrical strain that first showed up, well, way, way back. . .

MARY: "The early seventies —'70/71 — we did Architecture Revues at Uni in those days. I don't know about now, but there was still a little bit of room to have fun at university. You hear stories that there isn't any room any more, that it's all deadly dull and serious.

"They were such fun. . . I think I always wanted to do theatre, but never really had the nerve to enter what I thought might be a very jealous and competitive world. I think that's why we worked as such a small group for years, because I felt that I wouldn't survive.

"When we left Uni, the first big step was hiring a little theatre at the back of the Uni, and the next step was hiring the back theatre of the Pram Factory. That was when the Flying Trapeze Cafe opened; they came along and asked if we'd work there. We were so naive. We did it for $10 a week.

"We used to do these things called *Reefer Cabarets* in Melbourne which were terrific venues, like the Ormond Hall, and we used to do comedy while the roadies came in and moved the stuff for the bands. They were great fun; we had twelve inches of stage."

STEPHEN: "That was the best way to get a thick skin as a performer. I used to go around with another guy, Ron Peplino; we had an act, *Too Loose & Too Tight*. We used to go around to all those rock gigs. Some of them were good, but many of them were just awful to do because you had to go along to an AC/DC concert at some high school, and you had the school kids there rolling 'logs', as they were called in those days, and the whole sound system would be R.S. and you'd just stand there and talk and you'd just hear this buzzing noise, no words. You just hear this chaos in the audience and people slobbering around — it was like Dante's *Inferno* and you wondered why you were bothering standing there doing this act."

MARY: "Then the scene in the dressing room. Really sleazy, and lots of 'Don't touch that wire! Don't touch that wire or I'll kill you!'"

At some point in the proceedings Mary married Rod Quantock, (the subject of the rave at the bottom of this page), and the whole gaggle have the distinction of being the first act to play The Last Laugh, in 1976. That was the year that Mary dispensed with her legal career and came to Sydney, "to make our big break. We made a pilot for the ABC. Needless to say, it wasn't successful — it was then that we went full-time."

They worked for two years at Foibles, and in 1979 opened their own venue, The Comedy Cafe. "We had a friend with a credit rating," explains Mary.

From here came the Tim and Debbie that TV and radio audiences know. In 1980, the first *Brainspace* programme (a sort of Baby Brainspace, I guess), went to air on ABC Radio 2.

MARY: "We never could get Tim and Debbie on Melbourne radio. We were in Melbourne and it was produced in Sydney. They'd get a line from Telecom, with a guy in Sydney producing us. An unbelievable way of doing it. . ."

THIS initial hit of multi-mediahood seems to have convinced them that not only did the world need them, it *wanted* them. They moved into visual mode with *Ratbags*, which, although ill-fated as an Ongoing Holistic Concept For Young Viewers, pushed them so far into the public consciousness that there was no hope of extricating them. They grew like a benign tumour, fed nutrients by the ABC in the form of 2JJJ, and later, *Australia, You're Standing In It*.

Now there's the record, then more TV. Tim and Debbie have arrived, and it doesn't matter much that they don't know where they are. People are starting to talk about them, and you know you're getting somewhere when people who don't understand you, and possibly don't even *like* you, feel that they should try to talk to you.

MARY: "What's funny is the female journalists. . . *real* Debbies. . . who ask *why* is it funny? What *is* comedy? (But that's not to say that all female journalists are Debbies, of course. . .)"

No amount of post-mortem will bring a joke back to life, but it's all a healthy indication that they're getting a lot of attention, and for every Debbie journo there's thousands of Debbie fans.

MARY: "I've got a friend who teaches in a leading Melbourne girls' school, and she said that she can't write the word 'excellent' on the kids' work anymore. Some of them are actually going around with the hairstyle. It's a bit of a worry."

The lingering question is, where next for Tim and Debbie? It doesn't concern *them* much, happy blatherers that they are, and Mary and Stephen are happy for the moment putting their energies into writing the next *Australia, You're Standing In It*. It will be interesting to see how much staying power the characters have. Mary and Stephen are aware of the risks of over-exposure, have turned down a lot of offers, and are pleased with the pace of things now.

MARY: "We've had a lot offers to do ads, but we don't want to do ads. I said to Steve yesterday — it's terrific to think that we've done a record and done a TV show and that's great. Ten years ago we really wanted to do those things but quite doubted whether we could or not."

Tim and Debbie don't have too many worries either. Besides, whatever happens, they're pretty flexible people. . .

MARY: "Absolutely, without shame. You know, those people who can change their viewpoint and never feel ashamed that they were so stupid in the beginning."

STEPHEN: "Their opinions are *entirely* disposable."

Whoa! Look out! A major personality collapse! (Or maybe a Jekyll 'n' Hyde flash. . .)

TIM: "I think we should write a novel about the movie that we're doing a video of about our creative processes, and we should be filming ourselves filming the movie so that the best part of the movie would actually be us making the movie, so while Tim and Debbie are actually making a movie about something else, the most important thing is that they're making the movie."

DEBBIE: "That's an excellent idea."

STEPHEN: "Yeah, haul a huge misconception up a mountain."

MARY: "You know those people who say they are going to make a movie and they can go on for hours about the movie, but you'll never know what it's about, 'cos they're just in love with making a movie. It's just that simple thing about wanting to be a movie-maker rather than wanting to make a good movie.

"It's true I think. It's the same with comedians, and people who want to write comedy."

Exactly! Whatever happens, these two eggs understand the omelette they're in. They'll be, you know, *O.K!* As for Tim and Debbie, I figure they're safer in the rarified air of hyperstardom the way they are; not understanding anything. But Mary, who knows them better than I do, warns: "Sooner or later, they're going to have to deal with it".

BUS: SON OF TRAM

The Night Of The Nose

***ROD QUANTOCK knows all too much about Tim and Debbie. Also hailing from Melbourne, he has observed their careers from close range since the beginning, both as Mary Keneally's husband and as the third member of the triumvirate responsible for* Ratbags *and* Australia, You're Standing In It.**

In Sydney for unrelated reasons, Rod took our Comedy Curator out on the town one night, just hours after his meeting with Tim and Debbie. His somewhat garbled report. . .

Essential ingredients for a silly night: Quantock, bus, Groucho mask, impaled chicken

AS a business proposition, Rod Quantock's *Bus, Son Of Tram* is the kind of masterstroke that J. Wallace Grubblesnutch lives for. He called me the other day and says he's heard about this guy who's set up the best scam since sliced deodorant. . .

"This bloke's set up these bus tours, right?" he says. "He fills a bus a night with schmucks paying $15 a head, and you know where he takes them? To the most boring places on earth, that's where! Down to the shop, the post office, you name it! They *pay* for this, mind you, places they spend the rest of their lives avoiding. . . How does he do it? We've gotta meet this guy! He's a genius. . ." and so on. Grubblesnutch is so het up about this Quantock and his tours that he wangles some free tickets. He's determined to check him out, so he tells me to meet him at Kinsela's at eight; he'd be on the next flight. . .

I walk into Kinsela's, and there's Quantock, shoving a rubber chicken onto a sharpened pole, laughing. Grubblesnutch is sitting in the far corner next to the piano, scowling at anyone who looks like they might want to play it. In between are about fifty people, drinking and chatting and such. A fairly casual looking crowd, if I say so myself.

After about fifteen minutes, Quantock picks up a megaphone and tells everyone that the bus is about to leave, and all the people I'd figured were waiting for the show upstairs get up and walk out onto the street. Grubblesnutch and I saunter out behind them. He's impressed.

"I like the way he handles 'em," he says. "Megaphone's a nice touch."

A couple of minutes later we're piling onto the bus, a straightforward Government job that has Grubblesnutch talking about subsidies and grants and such. He's almost delirious with admiration, like he's met some kind of soul brother. He's more than a little perplexed when, a moment later, Quantock hands him a plastic Groucho mask, warning him that the hairs of the moustache are a bit loose, but that if he gets into difficulties he can spit the fur balls into a bag at the front of the bus.

I'm having so much fun watching J. Wallace fishing for fur in his mouth that I don't notice the bus pull up outside Grace Brothers' department store in George Street. Before we go in, Quantock tells everybody to take off their masks, and to put them on again when he blows the whistle like THEEEIIIS! The next time I hear it we're standing around the information desk asking for vacuum cleaners; where are they, why are they, and can we see one demonstrated?

On the fifth floor, Quantock finds some vacuum cleaners and has one of the G.B. girls put them through their paces for us. It's an interesting display, but not as revealing as the security guy trying to look sharp and risking his job by walkie-talking to head office some drivel about "a tall guy with an impaled chicken and fifty accomplices in Groucho masks rioting in the homewares department".

On the way to McDonalds we stop for some impromptu busking, and Quantock leads us in a hearty rendition of *Silent Night*, each in his own key, as he limps into the traffic, begging. Each except for Grubblesnutch, who's never heard the tune before and spends his time watching Quantock poke passers-by with his chicken.

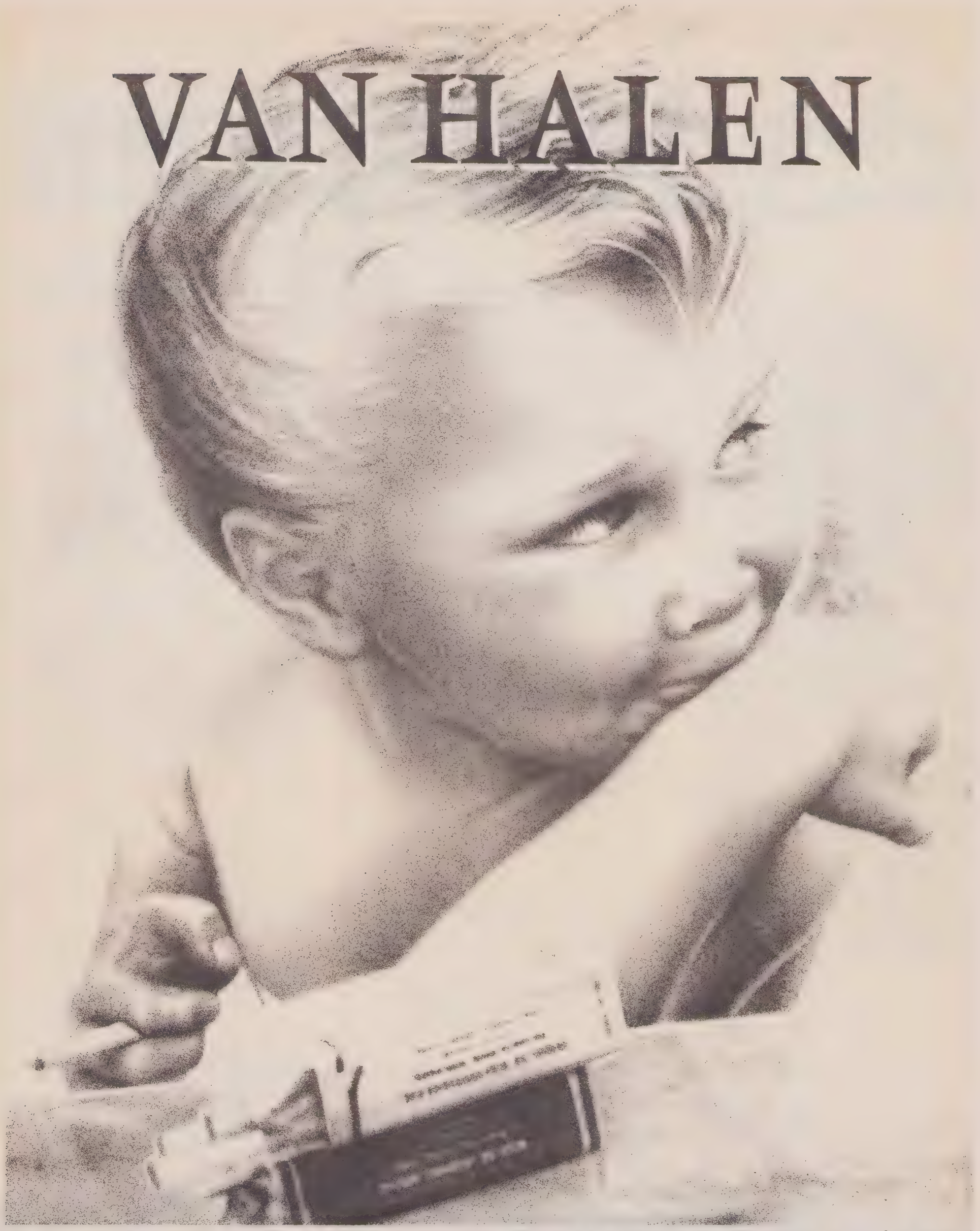
After a quick tango lesson at the Arthur Murray School of Dancing, we are refused admission to the *Jungle Bar* at the Menzies Hotel by someone who looks like he'd have trouble getting in anywhere else, but console ourselves by occupying the bottle shop and disposing of a couple of cases of ale. Quantock is disturbed when he finds the Sydney Festival Fun Fair is closed, but is fortunate enough to have a car accident happen in front of the bus on the way back as a consolation.

The post-mortem at Kinsela's is a lively affair, with much hoo-ing and haa-ing as to whether the expedition had been a fruitful one or not. Most feel that it has been — me included — though some of us feel that it was a bit of a hike between laughs. While Grubblesnutch sits alone with his calculator, working out the reduced overheads on a fleet of *Buses, Sons Of Trams*, Quantock fills me in on the history of the enterprise.

It all began a couple of years back in Melbourne, where Rod Quantock was party to a show called *Tram* at the Comedy Cafe. The show was a success, and it was generally agreed that a followup, a sequel, a revenge if you like, should take place. The only problem was that with two days to go before opening night, nothing had been written. It dawned on them that this could be a major stumbling block.

"A waitress at the Cafe, Sylvana Paloza, had just come back from Europe," recalls Rod. (I hazard first

VAN HALEN



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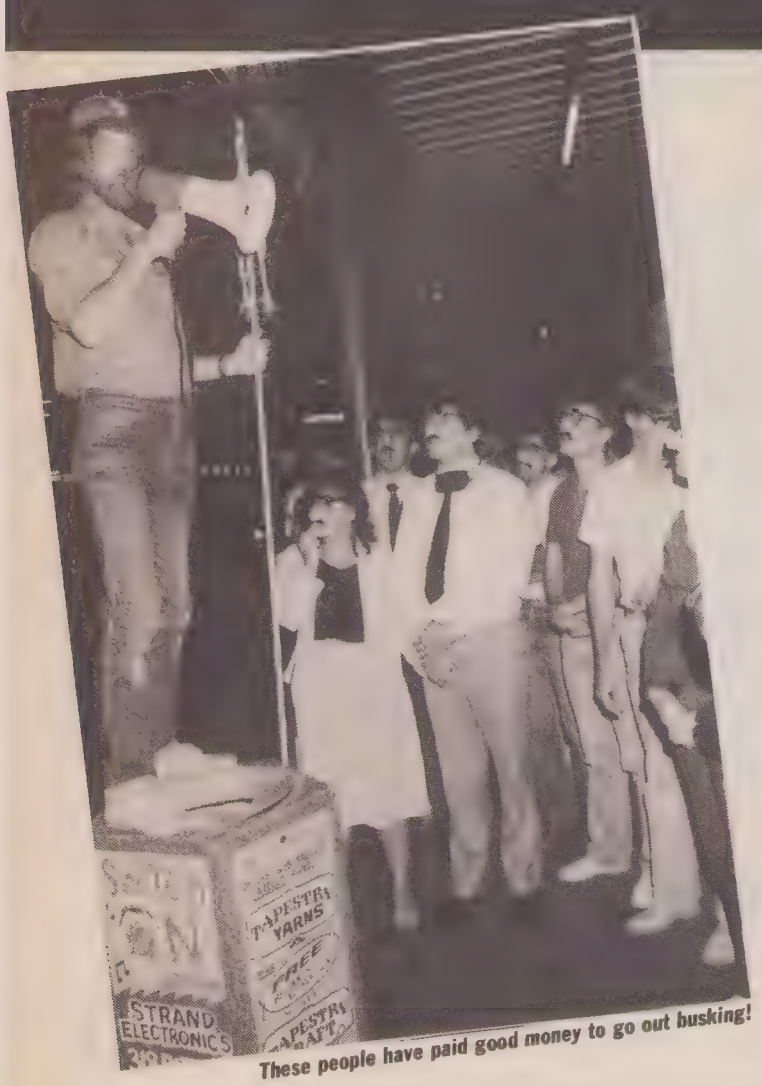


These people have paid good money to go out busking!

names now that the chicken is safely back in its holster.)

"She'd been round on buses, and she said 'Get a real bus and do a tour'. So we did that and went in to see the Myers Christmas windows, for about the first two months or so. It was just a walking tour of the Bourke Street Mall, occasionally wandering across to a shop over the road or whatever."

Grubblesnutch is staring wildly at him, tearing up shreds of notepaper. I ask Rod if he's had any major disasters, triumphs or moments of abject hilarity during his stint as a hit-and-run comedian.

"We tried to break into the Logies at the Hilton in Melbourne. We went through the kitchen, the back way. There were security guards all round the front, upstairs and in the lifts. They were hiding under pot plants and all sorts of things but nobody had thought about the kitchen. So I took 70 people through the kitchen; the staff showed us through 'cause I had an old Channel 9 security pass.

"As soon as we got into the foyer the security team just became totally paranoid. The whole idea of the system breaking down and us getting in there just terrified them, and they reacted in a. . ."

An abrupt fashion?

"'Abrupt' isn't a bad word, though I would have thought 'thuggish' was better. People had arm locks put on them and were pushed downstairs and all sorts of things. It was a proper demonstration I suppose in the end. But if you ask anyone who was on that bus, they'll say it was one of the best nights they've ever had, because they saw that kind of thing with a funny nose on."

How much difference do the Groucho faces make?

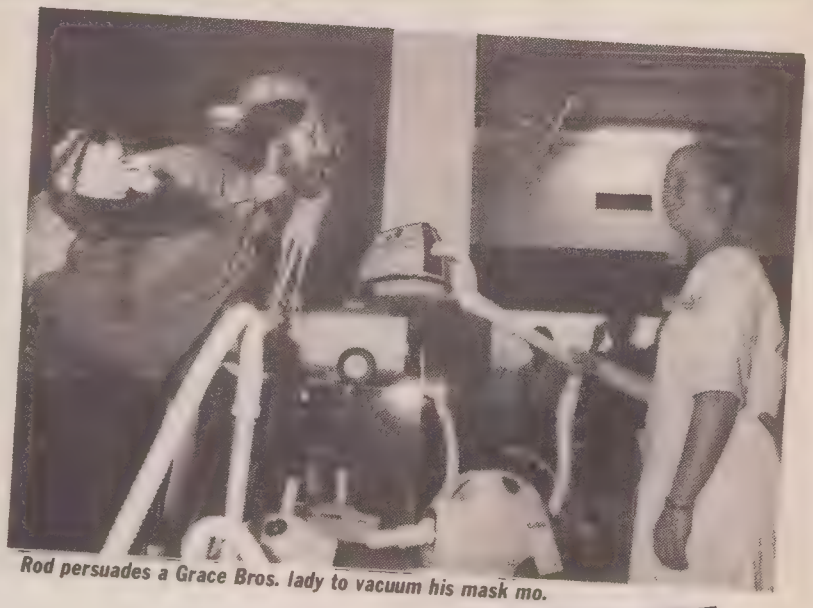
"It was noticeable immediately from the first night we used them that the demeanour of the audience changed and they weren't so reticent. I think the people on the bus like to observe, really. But yes, there are two extremes: the people who stand back and just won't get involved, and the people who get in the way.

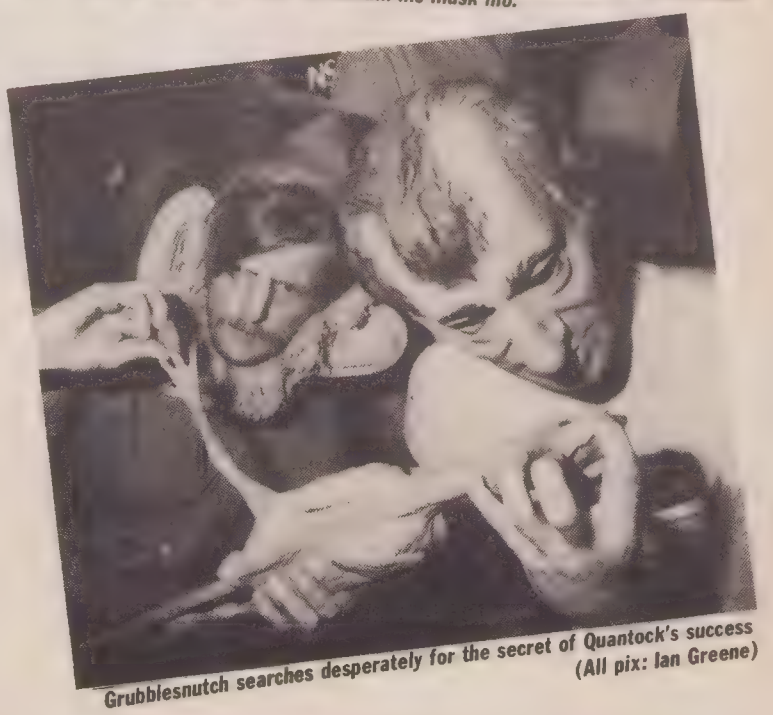
"I want to show people a good time. I won't do it at other people's expense unless I feel that those other people are being unreasonable."

I'm sure this is a little too considerate and good-natured to be the driving force behind a man who prods McDonald's staff with a rubber chicken — good comedy is never born out of an overwhelming desire to be nice to people. Later, he comes closer to what I think he feels about *Bus, Son Of Tram.*

"My judgment of it is that if I have a good time then it's all been worthwhile and bugger everybody else!"

Absolutely! Before we leave, Rod shows Grubble his chicken. . .


Rod persuades a Grace Bros. lady to vacuum his mask mo.


Grubblesnutch searches desperately for the secret of Quantock's success
(All pix: Ian Greene)

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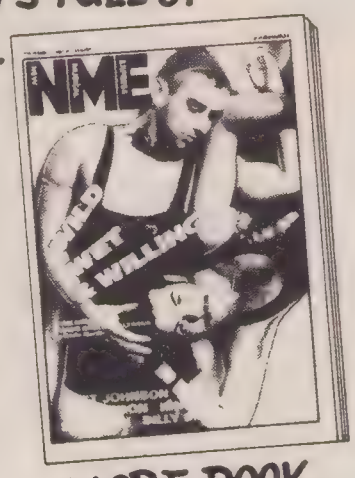

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ORWELL was right! A little vague on the finer details perhaps, but close enough to the mark. Like, George didn't count on Big Brother's musical inclinations, much less his physical form. . . So it was with equal parts shock, horror and awestruck amazement that I confronted BB in his natural habitat just three short weeks into 1984 — Apocalypse Now already.

Ten days of fevered phone calls, whispered exchanges, crossed lines and cleverly planted decoys. . . I was on edge. A clandestine mid-city rendezvous with BB's chief henchman had already been foiled. No show. Dogged by shadowy figures in raincoats carrying newspapers and wearing Walkmans, I decided the game had to be played their way. . .

Phone tap set, I dialled the number and waited. . . (That was one heavy Telecom bribe.) Took me two days to break the code. I was ready.

An innocuous-looking Sydney suburban shopfront, simply embossed with the key word. . . *MUZAK*. The overalls and toolkit scam worked —past reception, down endless flights of stairs and into a darkened basement; a barely audible whirr, the ominous odour of paraffin.

A light was thrown by an unseen hand I wheeled round on the ball of one foot and let out a gasp. Tape recorders. . . lots of them, standing as tall as sentries. Nearby, a rack of amplifiers — as if compelled by an invisible force, I reached for the volume control. . .

Just as the middle eight of *The Night Has A Thousand Eyes* thundered forth, everything went black. . .

I'd been sprung. But good. As consciousness slowly seeped back, I became aware of a gentle background babble, like the sound of violins talking among themselves. This was no ordinary situation. While my eyes slowly unglued, a voice (I swear it was human) introduced its owner. . .

"Good morning. I'm John Bowyer, managing director of Planned Communications."

He wasn't kidding. I wasn't listening.

"That music!" I blurted. "What is it? Where does it come from?"

The Voice pushed a minor avalanche of printed matter in my direction. I selected a pamphlet at random. It said: "*Muzak* is more than just music. *Muzak* is an environment. Music is art. *Muzak* is science. . . the science of stimulus progression."

Stimulus Progression? I was becoming more and more intrigued. The Orwell Connection was coming into view. . .

"The result of years of research and practical applications, Stimulus Progression employs the inherent power of music in a controlled pattern to achieve predetermined psychological and physiological effects on people. Leading companies and commercial establishments now employ the *Muzak* concept to improve environment, attitudes and performance. *Muzak* is a productivity tool of contemporary management."

Now fully awake, I listened. . . *It's Not Unusual* slithered out of the hidden speakers, followed by *God Only Knows*. But when the unseen orchestra swept into *If You Could Read My Mind*, I began to suspect I was the butt of some cruel, hideous joke. Strangely, I began to laugh. . .

"*Muzak* is not meant to entertain," admonished The Voice. "It's very much like air-conditioning — an environmental aid."

Tell that to someone who's ever been stuck in a lift. If the claustrophobia don't getcha, the *Muzak* will. It really does depend on what sort of mood you're in to start with. . . and where you happen to be.

TRUTH is, *Muzak's* been part of everyday life in this country for almost 25 years now. Shopping arcades, office blocks, supermarkets, hospitals, airport lounges, factories, restaurants — it's everywhere. But how did it come to be?

Strangely enough, it was invented by a military man — a General Owen Squier, who saw action in the Spanish-American war and World War I as a radio/telephone communications operator in the U.S. Army Signals Corps. Following his discharge in 1923, Squier began experimenting with the concept of music transmission through power lines. He took the idea to a public utility company, but was beaten to the punch when Marconi invented radio. Undaunted, Squier adapted his concept from power lines to telephone cables, and began commercial operations in New York during the mid-30s — *Muzak* was on air (or mid-pipe) for the first time.

It got its first big push forward during World War II, when *Muzak* was fed to assembly line workers in munitions factories in an attempt to reduce fatigue and boost productivity.

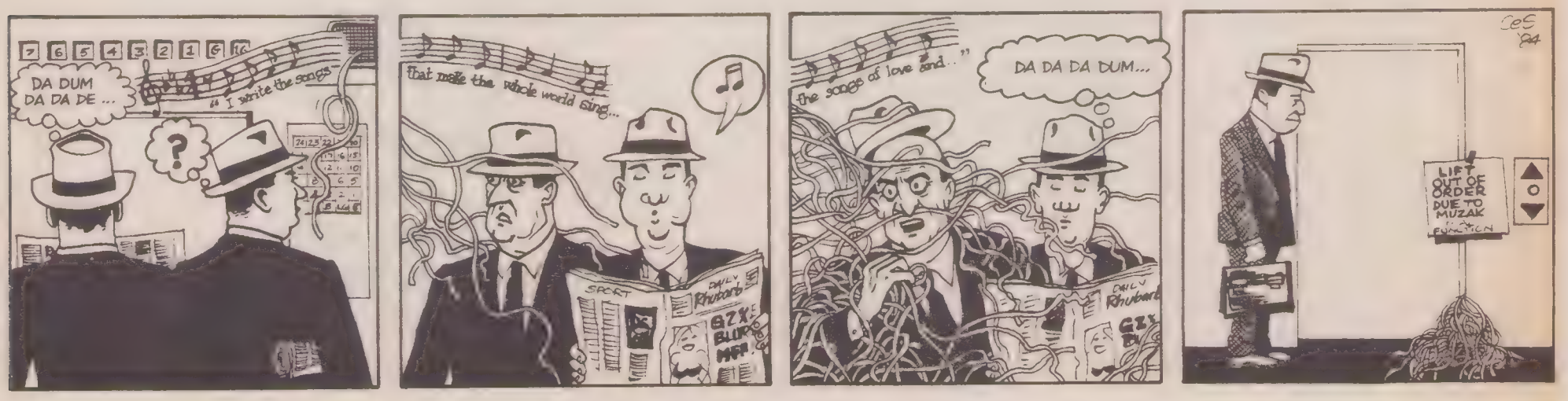
THE same principles still apply. The premise behind *Muzak* is that worker efficiency levels go through a series of 'peaks' and 'valleys' over the course of a normal day. *Muzak* is claimed to alleviate drops in worker efficiency brought on by fatigue, boredom and mental tension, thus creating a 'standard efficiency curve'. Simple, huh?

Yeah, but how do you account for people whose upper lips curl at the mere mention of the word 'muzak'? There are lots of them, and John Bowyer is quick with an answer. "Not all background music is *Muzak*, although it is a generic term. Sometimes that acts to our advantage, and other times there's some pretty horrible stuff around which isn't scientificially produced or recorded —we get lumped with the blame for all of it.

"*Muzak* is the only background music that is specificially recorded; all the others are just lifted from existing records."

Doubt if there'd be too many who could tell the difference. But at least *Muzak* provides work for musicians —Jimmy Page actually did muzak sessions prior to joining the Yardbirds. Bit of a quantum leap. .

Like the difference between Mantovani and Men At Work. But in 1984, they both have something in common — immortality through *Muzak*. Arranger Sven Libaek visited Australia last year to record eighteen Men At Work tracks for muzak posterity. In John Bowyer's words, "they'll be injected into *Muzak* over the next few months. We have the tapes here — they sound good, and the days of *Red Sails In The Sunset* are well


DA DUM DA DA DE ...
"I write the songs"
that make the whole world sing...
SPORT
Daily Rhubarb
the songs of love and..."
DA DA DA DUM...
LIFT OUT OF ORDER DUE TO MUZAK

and truly gone."

What he means is that *Muzak's* getting contemporary — which is another way of saying 'You won't be able to escape it'. Just the other day I heard the Police's *Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic* (with strings, horns, the works) in our

"Muzak isn't just music. It's more. Scientifically programmed in segments, each Muzak segment is designed to avoid depressing minor modes. It delivers a constantly ascending psychological lift, a lift which mitigates stress. At the same time, it masks numbing noise. What does this ascending movement, known as Stimulus Progression, do? It enhances employee morale. It makes employees feel management cares about their well-being. It reduces and relieves stress. It cuts down on boredom. It increases efficiency." (Advertising Brochure).

very own office lift. What worried me most about the observation was the obvious fact that I'm starting to *listen* to this stuff, albeit in passing. . .

What *perplexes* me most is that *Muzak* has been applied in industrial settings, with apparent success. (Sales figures speak for themselves.) It's piped through specially designed headphones (charmingly called 'Muzamuffs') — one earpiece houses a small amplifier, the other is a dummy — supposedly allowing the wearer to listen to the muzak while keeping one ear open to detect changes in machine cycles or warning signals. Sounds a mite dangeous, especially if you're into crossrhythms — unless the

Happiness is a warm pair of Muzamuffs?

soundtrack is synchronised with the pulse of the machines, of course. . .

"That's quite a salient point," acknowledges John Bowyer. "Going back in history, you had sea shanties and chain gang songs — which are crude forms of muzak, really."

What about whistling while you work?? No headphones needed, no royalties to pay. . .

THE most controversial application of *Muzak* (to my mind) is in retail outlets. The corporate rationale here is to (again quoting the literature): 1. "relax customers and employees, making customers feel that the store *cares* about them"; and 2. "encourage shoppers to stay longer, enjoy their shopping more and *spend* more". (My italics)

Me, I can't get out of a supermarket fast enough if the muzak is playing —which is probably quite insidious in itself. The tendency is to rush from aisle to aisle in a frenzy of impulse buying. So the store (and *Muzak)* win out on both counts.

And it's so cheap and easy to install! *Muzak* costs subscribers a mere dollar or so per day; for just the added expense of installing a moderately powered amplifier and a few cheapo speakers, the road to increased productivity and worker satisfaction is paved with *Muzak* (or so they're led to believe). Here's how it happens, from the mouth of Brother Bowyer himself. . .

"We are approached by a customer, quote an installation cost, then *we* approach Telecom — they extend their landline facility to the customer. The landline runs from our master studio through a series of booster stations to the store or office, then Telecom run a line from their nearest connection point. We connect amps, speakers, switch on and Bingo! *Muzak.*"

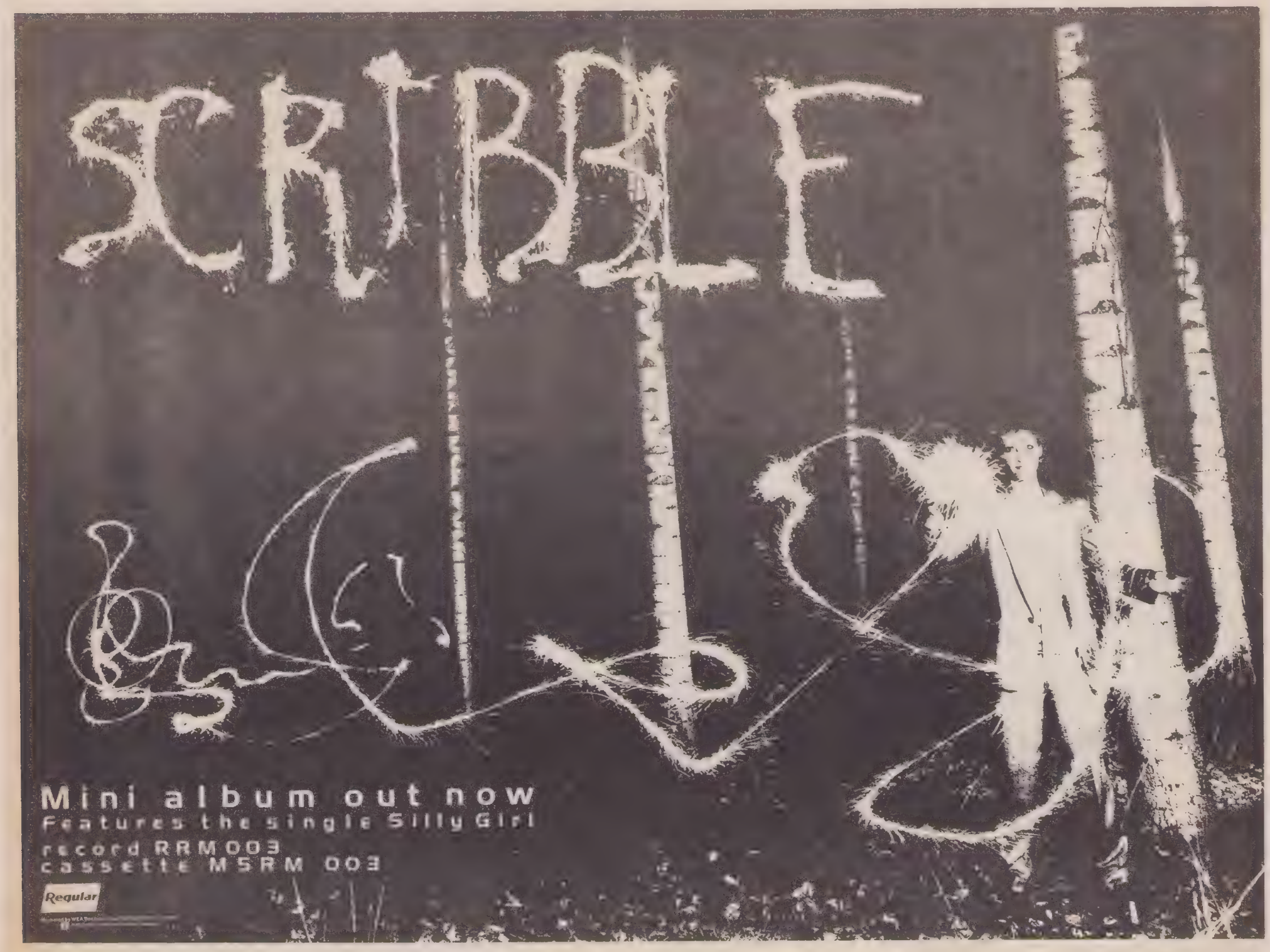
With a personal cost component of "a little over 50 per cent per annum" *Muzak* cleans up. It's the most profitable arm of an Australian-based company called

"Music is art. And art's benefits are random and unpredictable. Muzak has been tested and researched for years. Muzak's music is programmed to get results. Results which simply can't be duplicated by any other music system — radio, records or tape." (Advertising Brochure).

Planned Communications — which also includes among its products emergency warning and intercommunication systems, and something called an 'automatic message injector'. . . Soon, Big Brother may not only be watching, but listening and *instructing* as well.

Meanwhile, there's *Muzak* to fill in the gaps — soon for worldwide transmission by satellite. And it may be no coincidence that *Muzak* is the registered trademark of the New York-based 'Teleprompter' Corporation.

And now, a last word from our sponsors. . . "We've got *Muzak* in 26 countries now, and in excess of 150 million people a day hear it."



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Answers on page 30.

SCORES
0—12: You are as pure as the driven snow and believe that Nixon got bad press.
13—24: In Tallulah Bankhead's immortal phrase, you are pure as the driven slush, but haven't kept up your National Enquirer subscription.
24—30: You have great taste in tatty gossip but always forget the really good bits.
30—36: You edit the National Enquirer.

1.

Who said this about whom? "I'm awful sorry John got into this trouble and sorry that it ended up the way it has. . . I want the people to know that I tried to bring him up right and he's always been a good-hearted boy." Was it —
(a) John Lennon's Aunt Mimi on the occasion of the Beatle proclaiming that his band were more popular than God?
(b) John Lydon's father on the occasion of his son cussing at Bill Grundy on live TV?
(c) John Dillinger's father on the occasion of his son being shot to death by Federal agents as he left a Chicago cinema?

2.

Two members of Spandau Ballet are —
(a) Lovers?
(b) Brothers?
(c) Black?
(d) Retards?

3.

Which of the following protuberances has *not* had cosmetic surgery?
(a) Kevin Rowland's nose?
(b) Tom Jones' nose?
(c) Limahl's bottom?
(d) Wayne County's groin?

4.

Who said, "You'll never get anywhere singing in that sissy voice." Was it —
(a) Joe Strummer to Mick Jones?
(b) Kajagoogoo to Limahl?
(c) Angela Bowie to David?
(d) Tiny Tim's mother to her son?

5.

Who said, "Sorry 'bout the sweat, honey, that's just holy water." Was it —
(a) Mon. Bruce Kent?
(b) Cliff Richard?
(c) Little Richard?
(d) Bob Dylan?

6.

Who said, "I'm sorry to say, in all fairness, you'll never be anything." Was it —
(a) The BBC to Mick Jagger?
(b) Decca to the Beatles?
(c) The *NME* to *The Face*?
(d) Tiny Tim's father to his son?

7.

Who said, "If my God came into this room, I'd be awed obviously, but I don't think I'd be humble. I might cry, but I know he'd dig me like mad." Was it —
(a) Mark Thatcher?
(b) Marc Bolan?
(c) Bob Marley?
(d) Pope John Paul?

8.

Who said, "For a time we were in danger of becoming respectable." Was it —
(a) Keith Joseph?
(b) Keith Richard?
(c) Richard Branson?
(d) Hank. B. Marvin?

9.

Who said, "When you put six ducks and a rat on the stage, the rat's gonna stand out." Was it —
(a) Grace Jones?
(b) Grace Slick?
(c) Grace Kelly?
(d) A spokesman for the Stranglers?

10.

In 1983, who did John Travolta turn to for advice about a hair transplant?
(a) A priest?
(b) An older woman?
(c) Elton John?
(d) Warren Beatty?

11.

When Gordon Liddy — Nixon's Watergate burglar — was a child, he ate something really disgusting so that he could conquer his fear of the object. Did Liddy eat —
(a) His father?
(b) His nipples?
(c) A rat?
(d) A Jehova's witness?

12.

Whatever happened to Heinz?
(a) He died in a car crash in 1964.
(b) He works on an assembly line at Ford's in Dagenham.
(c) He joined the Salvation Army.
(d) He is a park attendant.

13.

What is Andrew Wham's pet name for George Wham? Is it —
(a) Sundance?
(b) Zorba?
(c) Yog?
(d) Dollbaby?

14.

Of whom did Brian Epstein say, "I'll always take care of him — he's the only one that matters." Was it —
(a) Gerry Marsden?
(b) Cilla Black's hairdresser?
(c) Billy J. Kramer?
(d) John Lennon?

15.

Who attempted suicide over Marlon Brando? Was it —
(a) The head of his Weightwatchers' branch?
(b) Montgomery Clift?
(c) Shelley Winters?
(d) Rita Moreno?

16.

"I always knew he would end up in bed with a boy." Who said this of whom?
(a) Tony Tune of Rod Stewart?
(b) Lisa Hoffman of Dustin?
(c) Ava Gardner of Frank Sinatra?
(d) Jo Grimond of Jeremy Thorpe?

17.

When Boy George was a boy, his father made him —
(a) Up?
(b) Wear frocks?
(c) Stand on his head for ten minutes whenever he swore?

18.

Who did Tom Wolfe call "The Marvellous Mouth"? Was it —
(a) Muhammed Ali?
(b) Julie Christie?
(c) Mick Jagger?
(d) Peter York?

19.

Bryan Ferry once had a relationship with Kari-Ann Moller, the girl on the cover of the first Roxy Music album. They rowed constantly because of Kari-Ann's children. Was this because the children —
(a) Played Eno records?
(b) Did mocking impersonations of Ferry's warbling singing style?
(c) Smeared their jammy fingers all over Ferry's white walls and white pile carpet?
(d) Forgot to collect Ferry's white tuxedo from Sketchley?

20.

Who wrote, "They fuck you up, your mum and dad." Was it —
(a) The Exploited?
(b) Frank Zappa
(c) Adrian Henri?
(e) Sigmund Freud?

21.

In Diana Dors' autobiography, the blonde blockbuster reveals that Danny la Rue once confided that a certain superstar was "not very liberally endowed in the lower region". Was la belle La Rue talking about —
(a) Elvis Presley?
(b) Paul Newman?
(c) Joe Orton?
(d) Robert De Niro?

22.

One night F. Scott Fitzgerald returned to his Paris home after a night's heavy drinking with Ernest Hemingway. What words, muttered that night in his sleep, convinced Zelda Fitzgerald that her husband and Hemingway were having an affair? Were the incriminating words —
(a) Toro, toro, Ernie?
(b) No more, baby?
(c) Now *you* be the matador?
(d) Nobody does it better?

23.

Which beautiful starlet did *not* give support to the Vietcong during the Vietnam war? Was it —
(a) Ann Margaret?
(b) Tuesday Weld?
(c) Jane Fonda?
(d) Susan St. James?

24.

Why did the Police originally dye their hair blonde?
(a) Because they were going grey?
(b) Because they wanted to look suitably youthful for a TV commercial in which they had bit parts?
(c) The Police never *did* dye their hair — Sting, Stewart and Andy are all natural blondes?

25.

Who said, "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked." Was it —
(a) Pete Townshend?
(b) Chas Smash?
(c) Allen Ginsberg?
(d) Kim Philby?
(e) Little Jimmy Osmond?

26.

Who said, "I am living proof that speed does not kill." Was it —
(a) Tiger Moss, the designer?
(b) Jack Kerouac, the writer?
(c) Johnny Rotten, the singer?
(d) Willie Johnstone, the footballer?

27.

For which charity did Christine Keeler work voluntarily in the late '60s? Was it —
(a) International Fund for Animal Welfare?
(b) Release?
(c) Shelter?
(d) The House of Commons Widows Trust Fund?

28.

Which book opens with the sentence, "A gentleman friend and I were dining at the Ritz last evening and he said that if I took a pencil and a paper and put down all of my thoughts it would make a book." Was it —
(a) Che Guevara's *Venceramos?*
(b) Karl Marx's *Das Kapital?*
(c) Ann Barr & Peter York's *The Official Sloane Ranger's Hand Book?*
(d) Anita Loos' *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes?*

29.

Who slept with an entire football team? Was it —
(a) Jimmy Hill?
(b) George Best?
(c) Britt Ekland?
(d) Clara Bow?

30.

Who said, "There is no more left and right, there is only up and down." Was it —
(a) Roy Jenkins?
(b) Bernie Rhodes?
(c) Milton Friedman?
(d) Bob Dylan?

31.

Which one of the following was *not* on the wrong side during the McCarthy witch-hunts?
(a) Elia Kazan (director of *On The Waterfront*)?
(b) Burl Ives (family favourite)?
(c) Jerome Robbins (sensitive choreographer)?
(d) Larry Parks (played the lead in *The Jolson Story*)?
(e) Ginger Rogers (hoofer)?

32.

Who said, "He was handsome, young, smart — but it didn't bother me much that he was dead." Was it —
(a) David Bowie on Keith Moon's death?
(b) Elvis Presley on Bobby Kennedy's death?
(c) Lester Bangs on Sid Vicious' death?
(d) Andy Warhol on John F. Kennedy's death?

33.

What did Phil Spector promise Ronnie Spector if she gave him the rights to her recorded work? Was it —
(a) Her life?
(b) Her son?
(c) Her future recording career?
(d) Five million dollars?

34.

Ronald Reagan once revealed that a certain something was an unacknowledged cause of pollution. Was it —
(a) Trees?
(b) Homosexuals?
(c) Jacuzzis?
(d) Indian reservations?

35.

What is the most powerful link between Adam Faith and Cliff Richard? Is it —
(a) Adam wed the only girl that Cliff ever spoke of marrying?
(b) They both became committed Christians in 1962?
(c) They have both been goaded into fist fights with Hank B. Marvin?
(d) They are both enormous in Germany?

36.

In the mid-'60s Jim Morrison would stand at the bar of the Ondine all night long drinking screwdrivers and downing tranquilizers. Girls would come up to him — but what did they do to Jim?
(a) Admire his leather trousers?
(b) Pinch his drink?
(c) Pinch his bum?
(d) Have their photograph taken with him?
(e) Duet with him?
(f) Jerk him off?

The "Close To The Edge" tour

FLAMING HANDS

Wed 1st Players — Paddington
Thur 2nd Belmont 16' Skiff Club
Fri 3rd Dee Why Hotel
Sat 4th Miranda Hotel
Sun 5th Cabbage Tree Hotel
Wed 8th Mansfield Tavern
Thu 9th Villa Hotel — Noosa
Fri 10th Queensland Institute of Technology
Sat 11th Playroom
Sun 12th Hacienda Hotel
Tue 14th Byron Bay Ex-Servicemans Club
Wed 15th TBA
Thu 16th San Miguel
Fri 17th Selinas

NEW SINGLE RELASED
13/2/84
"THE EDGE" BTS 1175

BIG TIME
records - tapes
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mark gillespie

FEATURES

ring of truth

ALBUM
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RCA
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WHEATLEY

OFF AND RUNNING

New Releases And Selected Charts

Welcome to the RAM Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action product page! Everyone complains about the limited access new records have to radio play, to the charts, to the propagating media: now EVERYONE can get a mention, if not a listen.

Rather than cater to product which reflects the meeting of big business with mass consumption, we'll be publishing a ranking which focuses on stuff that doesn't compete in the same arena. Sometimes it will be the INDIE CHART, a guide to the relative impact of releases outside the already well-covered activities of the major record companies and distributors; other weeks we'll publish popularity rankings from dance clubs, local radio stations — even the Man In The Street, goddamnit!

And as well, we'll offer a complete list of all local releases, be they major or indie. Each fortnight you can check how many of these turn up on your favorite radio or TV rock show (and see how much you're probably missing). To help you lay your hands on intriguing items, here we're printing the distributor rather than the record label.

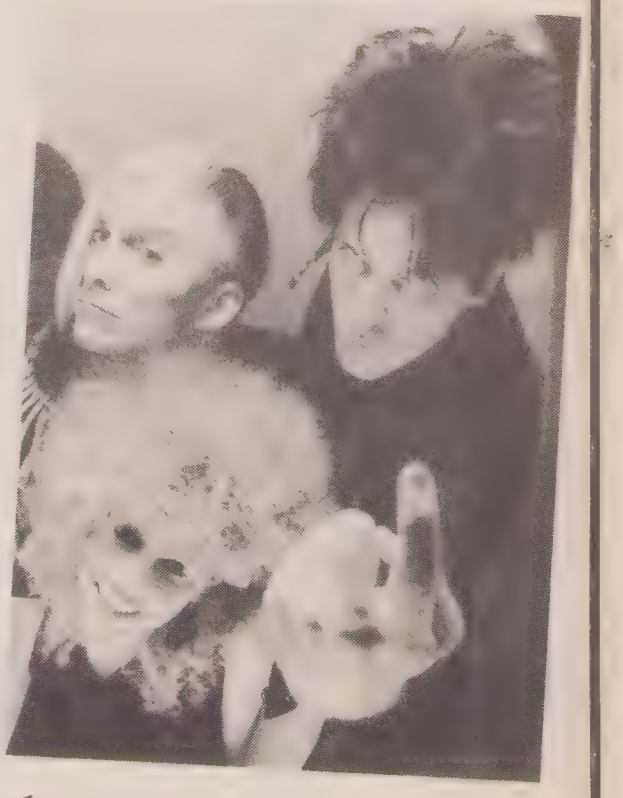
INDIE CHART

SINGLES

1 **WE HAD LOVE** ..... Scientists (Au-go-go)
2 **MUTINY** .....Birthday Party (Mute) — 12" IMPORT
3 **SOMETHING (SHOULD BE DONE)** ... The Skolars ..... (Method)
4 **METAL DANCE** ..... SPK (Desire) — 12" IMPORT
5 **BUZZSAW** ..... Vampire Lovers (Rubber)
6 **GARGOYLE** ..... Lighthouse Keepers (Guthuga ..... Pipeline)
7 **PRICE OF SILENCE** . Discharge (Clay) — IMPORT
8 **COLOUR IN** .....Particles (Certain Music) — EP
9 **SCIENTISTS** .....Scientists (White Rider) — EP
10 **ADVANCED COLOURING** .... Particles (Guthuga ..... Pipeline)

ALBUMS/CASSETTES

1 **SMELL OF FEMALE** ..... The Cramps (Enigma) — IMPORT 2 **TREELESS PLAIN** ..... The Triffids (Hot)
3 **BLOOD RED RIVER** ..... Scientists (Au-go-go)
4 **SAVAGE GESTURES FOR CHARM'S SAKE** ... Bill Nelson ..... (Cocteau) — IMPORT
5 **AUTO DA FE** .....SPK (Wynd Up) — IMPORT
6 **EXPLODING LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS**. Lighthouse ..... Keepers (Guthuga Pipeline)
7 **UGLY THINGS NUMBER TWO** ... Various (Raven)
8 **SOUND OF SYDNEY** ..... Various (Method)
9 **DUTCH COURAGE** .... German Humour (German ..... Humour) — CASSETTE
10 **SIDEROXYLON** ..... Celibate Rifles (Hot)



THE CRAMPS

SINGLES

WATUSI NOW* .....Sound Of God (Hot)
TUESDAY PIRANHA* .Stop All Your Talking ..... (Hot)
REFLEX.....Politics Of Dancing (EMI)
QUEEN ..... Radio Ga Ga (EMI)
DURAN DURAN .... New Moon On Monday ..... (EMI)
HONEYMOON* ... Nothing To Do With Love ..... (EMI)
KIM WILDE ... Dancing In The Dark (EMI)
PAUL McCARTNEY ...Pipes Of Peace (EMI)
BABSY MLANGENI ..... Music Was Born In Africa ..... (EMI)
JOHN DAVID ..... On The Mountain (EMI)
AUSTRALIAN CRAWL* ..Louie Louie (EMI)
MOVING PICTURES* ... Back To The Blues ..... And Booze (EMI)
THE MOTELS .Remember The Nights (EMI)
GRAHAM PARKER Can't Take Your Love For ..... Granted (EMI)
THE ELVIS BROS.... Fire In The City (CBS)
EARTH WIND & FIRE ..... Magnetic (CBS)
GEORGE DUKE/STANLEY CLARKE Heroes .....(CBS)
SPACE MONKEY Can't Stop Running (CBS)
TONY JOE WHITE The Lady In My Life (CBS)
XTC ... Love On A Farmboy's Wages (CBS)
BILLY JOEL ... An Innocent Man (CBS)
FLYING PICKETS ..... Only You (CBS)
THE ROCK STEADY CREW Hey You (CBS)
NORMIE ROWE* .... Rock And Roll. You're ..... Beautiful (CBS)
CABARET VOLTAIRE ..Dream Ticket (CBS)
CHINA CRISIS .... Wishful Thinking (CBS)
ROMANTICS .. Talking In Your Sleep (CBS)
PAUL YOUNG Love Of The Common People .....(CBS)
BOB DYLAN .....Jokerman (CBS)
EDDIE MONEY ..... The Big Crash (CBS)
MIKE OLDFIELD .. Crime Of Passion (CBS)
RUBINOOS .....If I Had You Back (WEA)
MANHATTAN TRANSFER.... Spice Of Life ..... (WEA)
VAN HALEN.....Jump (WEA)
BILLY FIELD* .....Undercover (WEA)
JOHNNY CHESTER* Tomorrow's Memories ..... Tonight (WEA)
PRETENDERS .. Middle Of The Road (WEA)
INVISIBLE COLLEGE . Dragging The Chain .....(RCA)
HEAVEN* ..... Rock School (RCA)
KATE GARNER..... Love Me Like A Rocket ..... RCA
GRAHAM LYALL* .....Marley (RCA)
GLORIA GAYNOR ...I Am What I Am (RCA)
JOHN LENNON ....Nobody Told Me (POL)
ELTON JOHN .....Kiss The Bride (POL)
LIONEL RICHIE ... Running With The Night .....(POL)
GENESIS .....That's All (POL)
EDDIE RABBIT You Put The Beat In My Heart .....(POL)
DONNA SUMMER ... Stop, Look And Listen ....(POL)
STYLE COUNCIL Solid Bond On Your Heart .....(POL)
BEE GEES Someone Belonging To Someone .....(POL)
MARILYN .....Calling Your Name (POL)
BIG COUNTRY ..... Chance (POL)
PETER CUPPLES* ..... Party Lights (POL)
MITCH RYDER .....Thrill Of It All (POL)
MARK HOLDEN* ....Alice (POL)

ALBUMS

FOUR TOPS . Back Where We Belong (POL)
PETER GOODWIN . Correspondence (POL)
EDDIE RABBIT ..... Greatest Hits II (POL)
JOHN LENNON/YOKO ONO ..... Milk And .....Honey (POL)
IAN DURY.....4,000 Weeks Holiday (POL)
HEAVEN* .....Where Angels Fear To Tread (RCA) **NORMA LEWIS** .. It's Gonna Happen (RCA) **PETER GREEN**.....Kolours (RCA)
WIDE BOY AWAKE .. Slang Teacher (RCA)
KIM WILDE ... .Catch As Catch Can (EMI)
SHADOWS..... XXV (EMI)
SHADOWS..... 20 Golden Greats (EMI)
JUICE NEWTON..... Dirty Looks (EMI)
SALLY SLOANE . A Garland For Sally (EMI)
JERRY LEE LEWIS ..✓ Rocking Rhythm And ..... Blues (EMI)
JOHNNY CASH/JERRY LEE LEWIS ... Sing ..... Hank Williams (EMI)
DREAMBOY..... Dreamboy (WEA)
VAN HALEN..... 1984 (EMI)
SANDII & THE SUNSETZ.... Viva Lava Liva .....(EMI)
PAUL RODGERS ..... Cut Loose (WEA)
SCRIBBLE* (Mini) ..... Scribble (WEA)
PRETENDERS... Learning To Crawl (WEA)
MICHAEL BLOOMFIELD . Bloomfield (CBS)
STANLEY CLARKE/GEORGE DUKE .... The Clarke/Duke Project II (CBS)
ELVIS BROTHERS..... Movin' Up (CBS)
PEL MEL*.....Persuasion (CBS)
TANGERINE DREAM ....Hyperboria (CBS)
THE THE..... Soul Mining (CBS)
TOMMY TUTONE . National Emotion (CBS)
WAS (NOT WAS) ..... Born To Laugh At .....Tornadoes (CBS)
WEATHER GIRLS ..... Success (CBS)
JIMMY CLIFF.... The Power And The Glory .....(CBS)
NINA HAGEN ..... Fearless (CBS)
EDDIE MONEY .. Where's The Party? (CBS)
SIMPLE MINDS.. Sparkle In The Rain (CBS)
TONY JOE WHITE .....Dangerous (CBS)

Australian artist

SEEN & HEARD

■ RECORDS ■ GIGS ■ MOVIES ■ BOOKS

ROBERT PLANT
(Sydney Entertainment Centre)

Frenzied, irreverent, highly volatile, totally unpredictable. . . and LOUD! That was Led Zeppelin, live in Oz some ten years back. Yeah, that was Led Zeppelin. . .

This is Robert Plant — older (36 this year), polite, restrained, in control. . . LOUD, but still in control, and still very much part of a BAND. Yeah, this is Robert Plant, and this here's a *band,* not a legend superimposed on backing canvas.

No support act to make 'em look better than they are, either. In fact, when the six-piece saunter on stage and ease into the opening bars of *In The Mood,* it's with the unassuming air of a new band. They could be opening someone else's show, but they *are* the show.

Besides the abominable mix early on, two people stand out immediately as frontrunning features — temporarily brushing a Reticent Monolith aside. With regulation rockist all-black formfit garb more befitting a frogman, guitarist Robbie Blunt peels off licks of all known persuasions like successive wet-suits. Behind him, speed-driven windmill Ritchie Hayward (ex-Little Feat) takes the sober, elegant rhythms of Plant's recorded solo repertoire, kicks from the inside and generally punches 'em out a little.

Four songs in (two each from both albums), and the Hayward/Blunt entente temporarily takes over — segueing from a decidedly Feat-ish funk feel into a full-on bottleneck guitar rave, with dual keyboards blowing harp sounds in bluesy counterpoint. From this to a deftly orchestrated cue, and a Dr. Phibes syntho-misterioso intro — *Through With The Two-Step,* the first of a four-song slab from *The Principle Of Moments* album.

Cute, trite but true. . . in the middle of *Horizontal Departure,* a departure — into a forced, stilted dalliance with reggae, and a contrived stab at audience involvement: *Lively Up Yourself.* Likewise, guys.

The Monolith, till now, has extended himself little — barely moving, partially involved, and singing at half-throat throttle. Suddenly, with *Wreckless Love,* he opens up — threatens to dance a little, lets out the histrionics and loses his shirt to an ardent stage invader.

By the round of encores, he's regained composure — *Burning Down One Side* smoulders into *Big Log,* and the band's capacity for abrupt colour change is like a cut from bushfire to desert. Now everyone's restrained, but hardly lulled — Blunt's muted guitar flourishes balance Hayward's move from kit to congas, and The Voice is at its most relaxed.

Enough! Plant erupts into a raging Chicago blues (his first love), and comes back again for *Messin' With The Mekon.* Frenzied, irreverent, highly volatile, but in control. . . and LOUD!

That was Robert Plant (and Band), 1984. Hardly predictable.

PHIL STAFFORD

(Pic: Ian Greene)

THE JAM
Snap!
(Polydor)

Seven years have passed since that first bleak winter of punk pinched the faces of British pop. Though they didn't really belong, the Jam had the leanest look this side of Rotten. No puppy fat fleshed out Paul Weller's cheeks. On the other hand, no Weller cheek lit up the Jam's sourdough songs.

Humour never figured strongly among Jam qualities. Of the 29 hits and close runs included here, only *That's Entertainment* has a strong sarky element, though the staccato yelps opening *Going Underground* are fun, too.

Otherwise, *Snap!* is scored through with Weller's dour honesty. Not that honesty is a bad thing, but the terms in which Weller chose to express it had him weighed down by all sorts of unenviable burdens, the first and most damaging of which was Mod.

The Jam's mod period was its dullest manifestation. Third generation mod was by definition off-the-peg individualism; a convenient way of standing out by going against the grain of punk and at the same time providing potential followers with readily identifiable signs.

Hearing the Jam's nouveau mod songs now leaves one wondering why anybody gave them the time of day back then. *In The City* through *The Modern World* are urbane English versions of New York wrong-side-of-the-bridge myths, songs brimming over with suburban jealousy, bristling with a sense of denial. Fortunately, Weller's pillhead frenzy only lasted two LPs. Always an acute observer, he saw the punky/mod party of his dreams turn sour and duly reported the ensuing mess in *A Bomb in Wardour Street* and *Down In The Tube Station At Midnight* — the first great Jam songs. On a more fundamental level, Weller had already exhausted mod and his Pete Townshend muse anyway. Turning instead to late-'60s Kinks, he found a far more valuable source.

Without Ray Davies' inspiration, Weller might have remained the resentful young sod behind *In The City*. Through Ray Davies he learnt to focus more kindly on the little man in his back garden, his dreams and aspirations. That said, his *Mr Clean* is distinguished by a biliousness you'd never find in a sardonic Davies song. Then, as already remarked, humour wasn't one of Weller's strong points.

Before the very Kinky *All Mod Cons* — still the only two sides of Weller i can listen to at one sitting — the Jam could best be defined by what they were not: they were never quick witted or witty. Neither were they particularly imaginative or that inventive. Their music was not really sexy or physically inspired. But after *All Mod Cons,* a gruff lyricism began to light up Weller's soapy realism. The success of the subsequent *Strange Town* gave him the confidence to play round with styles.

Running these singles back to back, one is forced to concede, no matter how reluctantly, that there was more movement within the Jam than is apparent hearing them one at a time. Weller's idea of adventure never strayed any further than perching his reluctant spokesman-for-a-generation persona on a different '60s sound. *Start!* draws on *Revolver* period Beatles. *Funeral Pyre* is the Beatles meet Siouxsie and the Banshees. *Town Called Malice* is Weller's late nod to mod's Motown roots. And *Beat Surrender* serves as a fittingly ironic close to their career.

It was a predictably tearstained end to a peculiarly British love affair between a generation and a group who mirrored its moods and grouches. Funnily, the Jam never succeeded in writing anything so cannily suited to its time as, say, the Specials' *Ghost Town.* Nevertheless, the Jam represented a triumph of sorts, the triumph of the little man over his circumstances. Contained within that triumph is the knowledge that Weller never lost sight of his roots, even when they threatened to severely restrict his vision. No mean triumph.

CHRIS BOHN

No Jam today (Pic: Paul Cox/LFI)

STRANGE TENANTS
Take One Step
(Bluebeat-EMI)

Strange Tenants, for those who skipped page 11, are a ska band from Melbourne.

It's difficult to play this kind of music in Australia without sounding instantly derivative. While Sydney's Allniters initially intended to recall the fun of ska, Strange Tenants operate on the more serious side of the spectrum.

Three of the four tracks on this twelve-inch EP are fairly conventional slices of ska. *Killer Zombies* features one of those Middle Eastern musical motifs so beloved of Madness, and lyrics that deal in semi-humorous horror-movie imagery and metaphors. *Two Steps Backward* is a competent ska/pop song that alludes to some vague confrontationist theme, while *Mr and Mrs* is a jaunty pub-rock romp.

The most interesting song here is however, atypical of the usual Strange Tenants approach. *Grey Skies* is a melancholy vignette of life in inner-city Melbourne, with references to Collingwood, high-rise Housing Commission flats, Victorian weather and the like. It's heartening to see a band that plays this type of music writing in a localised vein and managing not to sound forced or contrived. British ska bands have patented a sound that's become so thoroughly identified with England that it's hard for Australian bands to sound otherwise. This song points to a possible direction.

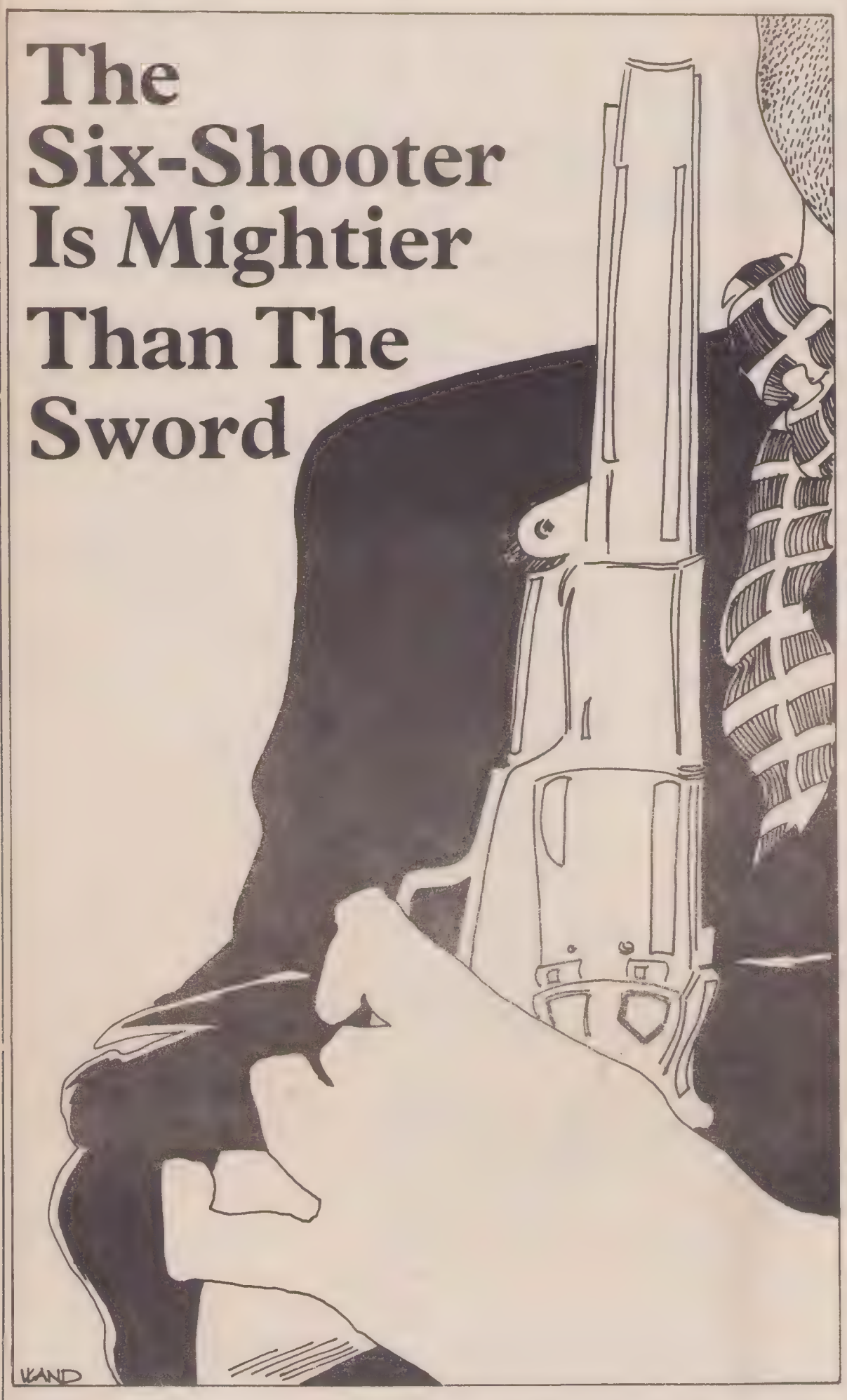
In spite of the songwriting ability on display and the clever use of brass, what ultimately lets *Take One Step* down is the lacklustre production. No-one in Australia, with the possible exception of Martin Armiger, has proven themselves adept at producing ska — so Strange Tenants (or at least two members thereof) have taken the logical step and produced it themselves.

The result is that none of the songs here leap out and *grab* you in the way that, say, the Beat's *Mirror In The [illegible] oom* or the Specials' *Ghost Town* [illegible] be a pretty hot [illegible]

FRANK BRUNO

45s OF AN URBAN COWBOY
OR

The Six-Shooter Is Mightier Than The Sword



SPENCER JONES, guitarist with the JOHNNYS outfit, rides rough-shod over the singles range.

There I was, up at the crack of dawn to round up the stray vinyl steers that had tumbled across the Darlinghurst prairie the night before. My guant face, marked for life by two bowie-knife scars, travelled slowly towards the north ridge of my lounge room. Below the hangin' tree and huddled together next to the Elvis Presley transistor radio doll were nineteen of the goodest, baddest and ugliest seven-inchers a man had set eyes on for a long while. I pulled out my pen, loaded it and took aim. . .

DEVILISHLY INTERESTING

KID CREOLE & THE COCONUTS
The Lifeboat Party/Gina Gina (Ze Records)
This Doppelganger fellow knows well enough how to make a great single which says in 2½ minutes what most spuds take an album to spit out. *Lifeboat Party* lassooed me immediately with its familiar big horn sound and maverick-like echo guitar break. The Kid sure is an exquisite dude. Is that a lifeboat or a shark wearing a party hat?

B-side warns Gina of impending misery with a ski instructor. What a lovely bunch of coconuts. "Welcome to the Lifeboat Party CHILE!" But take heed, critters; it's invitation only.

VIOLENT FEMMES
Gone Daddy Gone/Promise (Big Time-Slash)
This is wild!! This is fucking wonderful!! The cat's pyjamas!! And yep, a big favourite in the Johnnys' bunkhouse. A truly impressive self-titled debut album from this Milwaukee trio has managed to make most other recently released platters look distastefully tepid, and this single proves it. Lines like *'A thousand eyes turning blue'* combined with rubber band guitar and cactus-coloured xylophone put a lot of meat into *Gone Daddy Gone*. YEEE-HAW!!

TINA TURNER
Let's Stay Together/I Wrote A Letter (Interfusion)
If only Elvis was still alive to hear this one. Tina means it and sparks fly. A remake of an Al Green evergreen with B.E.F. helping out authentically (to their credit). Her sometimes abrasive voice is in complete control here, and this here cowboy has got one aching sweet tooth for more and more and more. *I Wrote A Letter* is more like her early '70s rocking-out style, with former husband Ike's absence unnoticeable. Maybe Roger Davies (Tina's current manager) has realised there's life after Sherbet.

MODELS
No Shoulders, No Head/A Rainy Day (Mushroom)
Regardless of the fact that Mushroom put too many words on the label of this disc, it does feature a bonus giveaway hole in the middle to reduce the confusion. Beers all around for Duffield, Freud, Kelly, Price and their subordinates for an autophanous, barnstorming, big bad-beat slinging single. This could have been a double A-side to my way of thinking. . . Heads and shoulders above the rest.

GOOD BUT NOT-SO-QUICK ON THE DRAW

THE ASSEMBLY
Never Never/Stop-Start (Mute)
Present success in the British charts indicates how popular *Never Never* is with the railroaders, cattle barons, mining magnates and NME tycoons. But it is not the classic product I had hoped for. Feargal Sharkey has one of those wild, hell-fire type voices (not unlike Noddy Holder) which is evident in former incarnations; but here, more like a wounded crawl. A smart collaboration with Vince Clarke and E.C. Radcliffe makes things interesting nonetheless.

The flip tune, *Stop-Start* is like a hokum version of *Barnyard In Orbit*. . . VERDICT: Needs more Tabasco

SANDII & THE SUNSETZ
Sticky Music/The Mirrors of Eyes (Sire)
Manudo forever!! I just love ethnic music, and Sandii just loves Johnnys posters. She is a real treasure and I'm forced to swab nervous sweat from my brow with every listening. Alas, this chunk-o-funk gunk makes small ripples in the sea of chartbreak.

SPLIT ENZ
Message To My Girl/Kia Kaha (Ever Be Strong) (Mushroom)
Hallelujah! With Neil Finn at the reins, along comes another single off the *Conflicting Emotions* album by the much revered sons of Te Awamutu. Dare I say it, they're not at their most exciting musically with *Message To My Girl*. Clever use of a Haka chant on the flip demonstrates they can do better. (But then some good bands are just difficult to drink beer to, at the best of times.)

STRAY CATS
Rebels Rule/Lookin' Out My Back Door (Arista)
Well, er, yes, I suppose teenage rebels *do* rule, but these chaps sound a little far removed from their original teen mission. Too many Britt Eklands and not enough Indians; I'd bet my money they don't even send postcards to their tattooist anymore. It's hardly rebellious to put a beep over the word *'butthole'*. Why not say it and forfeit *Solid Gold* appearances for a more uncompromising integrity? *Lookin' Out My Back Door* does much better service to John Fogerty's erudite magnificence.

JOE JACKSON
Memphis/Laundromat Monday (A&M)
Ah! A cliche rap on Memphis, eh Joe? Where the hell is Memphis? Indeed. . .

I can't stand a man struttin' his self around like a pig, but there's still just enough aggressiveness in this song to keep me awake. Chorus idea on *Laundromat Monday* is pretty much the same as *Memphis* in a sort of slogan-rock approach, which I dislike. Not the Joe Jackson I once enjoyed. If he was really smart he'd pursue matrimony with Lisa Marie Presley.

THE CURE
The Love Cats/Speak My Language (Sire)
The Cure's Robert Smith claims he can beat all the Banshees at pool, and after hearing this I believe he can. *Love Cats* is cool and jazzy with sections reminiscent of Hurricane Smith or the Stampeders' *Sweet City Woman*. Like Harvey Korman's facial expressions, both sides are not great, but they are good.

SADDLE-SORE MEDIOCRITY

TOM TOM CLUB
Pleasure Of Love/Never Took A Penny (WEA)
Form the wagons into a circle! We must resist this Sesame Street funk tribe before they crop our ears!

JOHN LENNON
Nobody Told Me/O Sanity (Polydor)
Nobody Told Me sounds like a second-rate song a faded rock star would write after spending five years in seclusion with his wife and child. Yoko's crazy, one-minute-four-second B-side stock count is also less than delightful. Money is obviously Polydor's motive for this release. Indirect robbery should be a hangin' offence.

THE KINGSWOODS
Purty Vacant/The Commissar's Song (Green)
"A Brisbane-based trio with fluctuating membership centred around the writing and arranging skills of Peter Kroll", according to the cover notes. "A bluegrass version of the Sex Pistols' classic rocker *Pretty Vacant* done in the Kingswoods' best Jed Clampett vocal style", according to the cover notes. Personally, I think this genre is only mildly amusing, and my endurance of this novelty outing was only two spins.

THE EUROGLIDERS
Another Day In The Big World/Simon (CBS)
This trite, substandard stew gives me a headache and gnawing gut, but at least it had an effect on me. These here Perth hombres have pulled bigger jobs than his one. . . Steel drum in there somewhere. *Simon* is really stupid.

CUB CALLOWAY AND THE CULT
Nursery Rhyme Time/Harry's Cafe de Wheels/Special Boy/Cry To The Wall (Mosaic)
Cub packs a shiny mean guitar shooter — most days. This low volume pressing EP has a mighty vague aim for what I believed was a foot-feverish cult gang to ride with. *Special Boy* is the central horrible offender of these varied four. VERDICT: Absence of rodomontade unhealthy.

SUPREME DEBILITY (OR CRANBERRY SAUCE FOR TURKEYS)

DAVE McARTNEY & THE PINK FLAMINGOS
Dance On/High Tide (CBS)
Mind shattering ennui. Yessiree, this is what happened to Hello Sailor's former fret ace and the same man who boasted looting Keith Richard's smouldering L.A. residence. All the quaint old-fashioned charm of a sheriff buggerisin' a hog.

TOYAH
Rebel Run/To The Mountains High (RCA)
No rebels here, just a decorated, economy-class, house-trained twit. A deck of cards is the devil's prayer book for some. . .

BARRY MUNDI & THE FISH CAKES
I'd Like To Strangle My Boss/The Strangle Rap (Avenue)
To be filed under 'Mark For Death'. Slim Whittle could win this race by six furlongs. I prayed to Elvis every night to karate-kick the gong on Dave & the Derros. For young viewers only.

SMOKEY DAWSON
Hero From The West/John Durack (ATA)
How do I loathe these songs? Let me count the ways. . . It goes without saying, or does it? Let's combine Vincent Crane's head with Strother Martin's body, adding Tom Mix's worst cowboy suit and including a cheap guitar in need of $80 worth of repair. I reckon we're gittin' close, but beer won't help any. Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing. Water, rub-down, oatbag and clean straw. Uh-huh.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Sound of Sydney Volume 1 (Method Records/Hot)

As a compilation of eastern suburbs and north shore bands based around places like the Mosman Hotel, this record is not so much *the* sound of Sydney as *a* sound. Surf culture catching the new wave (I could never resist a sick pun), Method Records are a new independent who've shown endearing freshness, poor taste, idiosyncracy and brash promise in bringing together an uneven collection of bands that for the most part I've hardly heard of — in spite of the fact that they've all sold out their original single pressings. Still, it's another world alive and flourishing away from the inner city that can't and shouldn't be ignored.

Most of the music is simply executed pop or rock with an eighties' flavour (influenced by the likes of the Police), and sixties' Mod music filtered through acts such as the Jam. As a documentation of a region giving exposure to young bands, releases like this are essential; as a part of your record collection the rights of entry are less defined. Of the two bands I do know something of, **Spy Vs Spy** surprise with the raw and nervy *Brightside*. The **Allniters** *aren't* alrighters, I'm afraid, contributing their irritating hand-me-down ska-faces on *She Made A Monkey Out Of Me*.

Powerplant by the **Products** is a rather prophetic opener with its fusion of pop with a guitar sound vaguely reminiscent of *Bombora* (one of my all-time pet hate songs). Likeable enough in spite of my own negative associations, it's followed by **Personnel** with *Never Be Your Man*, a danceable attempt at impersonating the Police. **Fast Cars** chime in with the album's standout track, *Saturday's Girl*, an ode to the working girl's social imprisonment. *Gone With The Wind* sounds like the Seekers, but apparently it's the **Girlfriends**, and is so pitifully bad it almost triumphs in a perverse way. The **Skolars**' *Something Should Be Done* bemoans the state of the world with a chorus urging *'something should be done about it'* (sic). Worst of all, the damned thing is actually catchy, blending a Police-ish opening with cocktail piano and an all-female vocal choir.

Dress Up Picasso is a tin-pot melodrama trying to be deep and meaningful — **Moving Parts** should have their license to use an echo unit revoked, **Division 4** play moderately tuneful pop that is inoffensive if unexceptional. *Subordinate* by the **Progression Cult** is a promising piece of punkified experimentation, the only angry song on the record and one of its strongest.

So, a mixed bag but an interesting one, with Fast Cars and Progression Cult standing out while the rest labour in a sea of mediocrity and/or ill-conceived ideas. The most interesting thing about *Sound Of Sydney* is that it *does* present a discernible identity, a flavour that could turn up more interesting tastes as well as be a welcome cross-over in the far too insular and regionalised Sydney scene. The growth of Method Records and releases such as this might at least begin to break down parochialism and create a better exchange of ideas. A faltering step in the right direction.

MARK MORDUE

ADAM ANT
Strip (CBS)

As a video star, Adam Ant is matched only by Michael Jackson and Duran Duran. As a songwriter, he produces (in collaboration with longtime ally Marco Pirroni) consistently clever singles. As a live performer he looks good.

As for albums — I thought a poster that sang in the dark, an Ant doll, or a new line of Ant video games more to the point. *Strip* is nothing more than a soundtrack in search of a storyboard, a pelvic thrust, an Ant body to give it flesh, flash, and sex appeal. *Strip* is one song sung ten times. *Strip* is the bodyline of modern pop.

The world of Adam Ant is based on appearance; a world of fairytale and fantasy in which Adam Ant plays God's gift to orgasm with vaudevillian flair, supremely aware he provides the momentary relief of entertainment for the masses. His move from the buccaneer-warrior to the English dandy-highwayman has been a masterpiece of marketing strategy. The buccaneer exists in the company of fellow conspirators — he is part of a group. The dandy-highwayman, however, is a loner who makes his own laws, an outsider who combines the potency of Don Juan with the dash of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Thus Adam And The Ants become Adam Ant.

Strip reinforces the image. The album cover comprises two stills from the *Puss 'N' Boots* video; front of jacket reveals the supple creamed skin of our hero — the delicately moist pink lipstick highlighting his beautiful mouth, his eyes glistening with a thousand nights of love, a piece of straw thrust oh so nonchalantly between those perfect white teeth, the earring dangling suggestively from his left lobe, the golden chain draped around that perfect English neck, . . . and the back cover finds Miss Puss and Mr. Ant looking like a severe case of coitus interruptus.

By the time you seize the inner sleeve, it's quite obvious what Mr Ant does right. In this picture he has discarded his dandy shirt to reveal the Ant torso. Not bad for a man who writes: *'People making love says more/than any word or letter. .. Something good wil happen here tonight/and far across the room/So deep inside her soon/your passions like a spear of true delight' (Baby Let Me Scream At You).*

Blossom-scented daughters beware! Mr. Ant doesn't care about the state of your soul, the condition of your psyche, the circumstances of your life. He only wants your bankbook to purchase a reproduction of his body, the libido in his voice, the fantasy of his flesh. Take him on. He's serious enough to have a sense of humour about his place in the cultural supermarket. Buy him. He's pre-digested for easy consumption.

TERRY BYRNES

PAUL SIMON
Hearts And Bones (WEA)

'Maybe I think too much,' frets Paul Simon as he worries his way through both sides of his new album, his first for three years. In fact, he's been working on *Hearts And Bones* for most of that period, with time off for a lucrative exercise in nostalgia with former partner Art Garfunkel. So it's obvious that this man likes to dwell on things, and in nine and a half songs (there are two different versions of *Think Too Much*), he worries himself sick about allergies, machines, numbers, love affairs, the death of John Lennon, and much more.

What saves Simon's work from total maudlin blandout are his melodic inventiveness and his deft lyrics. A lurking penchant for sentimentality is balanced by sudden ironic twists that serve to deflate the serious bits. There's more than a touch of that wry, shrug-it-off sense of humour that characterises Jewish comedy, although — as usual — the latest album is liable to veer between acuity (*When Numbers Get Serious*) and straightout cuteness (*Allergies*).

Thematically, *Hearts And Bones* is about the gap between thought and action, and other splits are implicit — mind and body, thoughts and feelings, perceptions and reality. In *Think Too Much (a)*, Simon recalls a *'period of grace/when your brain just takes a seat behind your face'*. But life isn't always that easy for a smartass songwriter. In *Train In The Distance*, he admits that *'the thought that life could be better/is woven indelibly into our hearts/And our brains'*.

Such disillusionment can be hard on your health, and in *Allergies* he complains: *'My head intercedes with my bodily needs/And my body won't give it a break'*. In the end, the intellectual approach seems safest and sanest, and the title track sees *'one and one-half wandering Jews'* coolly examining the *'arc of a love affair'* — almost as an exercise in pure mathematics. And in *When Numbers Get Serious*, the process is complete, as Simon cheerfully manipulates numbers *('two times two is twenty-two')* and emotions *('I will love you innumerably/You can count on my word')* without ever getting as serious as the title threatens.

From the vast resources of American music Simon offers his customary blend of gospel, Tin Pan Alley, Creole and rock. An all-star cast of New York's finest provide seamless, tasty settings, yet amid the polite restraint of the arrangements there is an occasional flash of brilliance — Al Di Meola's nervous guitar solo on *Allergies*, the driving cello boogie of *Train In The Distance*, and in particular the two collaborations with ace funkster Nile Rodgers.

With the album's tour de force, *The Late Great Johnny Ace*, Simon spans thirty years of pop music and his own musical career, linking the shootings of a Memphis blues singer, a president and a former Beatle in a song which, in its simplicity and innocence, somehow avoids the mawkishness that the subject-matter might suggest. It's a long way from poet's corner to an achievement like this, and Simon has made the journey with rare intelligence and humour. If there remain annoying traces of his earlier whimsy and glibness, well — no-one's perfect. You can think too much about things, and end up still crazy after all these years.

CHRIS STAFFORD

IDIOM FLESH
Inheritance (Rama/Hot)

Urban primitives in search of a little magic and beauty, Idiom Flesh were another trembling ensemble who threw loungeroom dreams out into the world pool. Now sadly split, this EP stands as a glimmering promise of a band well on their way to carving out their own identity, a rare and frail genius bubbling through the more flimsy and awkward immaturities. Vacillating between bold adventure and ersatz experimentalism the I.F.'s remained one of this city's most engaging pieces of blue water.

Inheritance is divided into two approaches: a rattling of pop bones on "one side" and some free-form journeys of exotic sketchiness on "the other side". As luck would have it they're far more successful in the latter space, where room to move has given us songs to breathe.

Idiom Flesh's pop incantations were often too self conscious, busy or just plain clumsy to be effective. *Seven Faces* jumps about everywhere without getting far, a prime example of the band's annoying ability to turn rhythmic and percussive strengths into grating weaknesses. *Some People* is a fine song flatly delivered, and only *Dance's* celebration of dancefloor rituals stands up through its own exuberance and Tom Change's fine declamatory vocal style. Just fascination?

Onward to more formidable territory, where comparisons to Eno and Byrne on *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* and Jah Wobble on his *Bedroom Album* COULD be made. Though Idiom Flesh lack that level of sophistication ,their naive and liberating blend of vaguely ethnic sounds and experimental dabblings explores a parallel universe of new spaces and sounds. *Oasis* is about looking instead of finding, a note Idiom Flesh strike in the most oblique of corners that mirrors much of their preoccupation with process. Hypnotic and irresistible, it's followed by *Landscape*. Like drops of water on a forehead it comes and goes — the rolling synth lines, the half-formed words, the sounds, a relentless conga beat and the persistent clashing of sticks.

Two mysterious, almost Middle Eastern dunes of sound, wondrous and wandering, a fully unformed world where everything is implied and nothing is stated. From "the other side" indeed. Along with *Dance* they make the EP a necessity, a record of a band straining and sometimes touching the edges of something great. It's nothing more than a promise. . . I.F.

MARK MORDUE

RENEE GEYER
Faves
JO JO ZEP & THE FALCONS
The Sound Of. . . (Mushroom)

A collection for the party, a collection for history. No 'Best Of's really, but selections from two acts whose recording careers span nearly a decade of the finest soul music (in the widest sense) this country has ever produced. The only beef you can have with these records is second-guessing the track selection.

I did that less on *Faves* than with Jo Jo Zep. Could be because it's not attempting a complete retrospective. One side is 'Dance', the other 'Romance', and the cobwebs on the concept don't matter, 'cos Renee Geyer *is* about hot funk interspersed with sultry ballads. After you've bopped through the first, having to do nothing more energetic than sway meaningfully through side two has its attractions.

The 'Dance' tracks include three singles — *Hot Minutes, Love So Sweet* and *Trouble In Paradise* — that haven't appeared in album form. I've always regarded *Hot Minutes* as one of Geyer's few bummers, but the rest of the side — from classics like *Shaky Ground* and *Money (That's*

Idiom Flesh (Pic: Lisa Hoystead)

THE UNDERTONES
The Sin of Pride (EMI)

To the detriment of Australian pop fans, the Undertones have been seriously underrated in this country. I have never seen their clips on TV or read about them in the Australian music press. *(Gee, Frank, what else did you miss in Issues 125 and 173? — Ed.)* All I can vaguely remember is hearing one of their early singles on Double Jay about three years ago.

Now they've gone, with the result that very few people here will ever know about or remember this Irish combo who were one of the best pop outfits to come out of the UK in their time.

From the punkoid pop of their early days — best typified by *Jimmy, Jimmy* — to the sophisticated soul sounds of this album, issued mid-'83, the Undertones specialised in an ideal that has rarely been attained: forceful pop that while being smart, catchy, clever and irresistible was also honest, uplifting, moving. No-bullshit music that was emotionally affecting, extremely intelligent and made you want to get up and dance.

The *Sin Of Pride*, their fourth and perhaps best album, is a fitting end to their career. Here they take their direction from the sounds and rhythms of soul music, while retaining an integrity that makes other British blue-eyed soulsters like Dexy's Midnight Runners and Paul Young look like shallow frauds.

The opening blast, a cover of the Isleys' *Got To Have You Back*, with Feargal Sharkey's soulful tenor brogue up front, sounds like one of those giant Irish show bands. Emulating rather than imitating the attack of classic Motown, the Undertones achieve a sound so *huge* it's literally breathtaking. The addition of a two-man brass section, a three-woman string section and the backing vocals of Sylvia & the Sapphires has increased the scope of the Undertones to such awesome proportions that it's hard to believe there's not a whole orchestra behind them.

They apply the lessons learnt from this approach to their own songs with similarly rewarding results. *Love Before Romance* is an impossibly haunting and immense ballad, owing more to the lush early seventies' Philadelphia sound of Gamble and Huff. *Untouchable* has an unstoppable brass arrangement that just picks you up and shakes you without mercy. The other cover, Smokey Robinson's *Save Me*, is an evocative ballad from the master himself: listen to Sharkey's voice, you can actually *feel* sheer yearning.

It's pointless however to single out highlights, since every track is a minor pop masterpiece. They're all love songs of course, mostly dealing with the darker side of love, love lost and love betrayed. Yet there's not a hint of self-pity, just tenacious hope laced with a healthy dose of cynicism.

The Undertones are the *real* Celtic soul brothers.

FRANK BRUNETTI

SEEN&HEARD

■ RECORDS ■ GIGS ■ MOVIES ■ BOOKS

What I Want) to the pressure-drive *Tenterhooks* (from the *Moving Along* album) and the '82 hit *Say I Love You* — blisters right along.

The talent is part putting over songs, part putting together expert backing bands. The ballads sometimes get smeared by tacked-on string arrangements (e.g. *Stares and Whispers),* but the various rhythm sections remain precise and tasteful. With the exception of *Sweet Love,* they're all standards in the Geyer repertoire: *Ready To Deal, It's A Man's Man's World, Heading In The Right Direction. If Loving You Is Wrong* and *Going Back* (pity there isn't a version without Glenn Shorrock, not to mention the great latter-day rendition of *Sitting Here In Limbo).*

Faves has notes beyond the track listing: *The Sound Of Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons* makes a fair attempt at charting the band's history, with a full discography, lineup lists, and an oddly illuminating track-by-track memoir from Joe Camilleri (e.g. "I had realised by this time that we didn't have to record every year, and *Sweet* was a radical departure . . . It was also a radio disaster. . . they stayed away in droves").

The cuts run from the first album, (1975's *Don't Waste It),* with *Security* and original singer Wayne Burt's presentation of *Dancing Shoes,* through to four of Camilleri's most recent recordings — *Taxi Mary, Sherrie, Walk On By* and *Losing Game.* In between you get most of the hits — *So Young, Hit And Run, Shape I'm In, All I Wanna Do, Puppet On A String* — plus the Graham Parker-ish *I Will Return* and the great honking live favorite, *Honeydripper.*

Which is all good stuff, and if you're wondering, as I did, why some of the early albums weren't more fully represented, you might make the same sad discovery that I did last night when I dug them out.

Sentimentally, numbers like *The Girl Across The Street, I'm In A Dancing Mood* and *King Of Fools* deserve a place, but on cold, hard recording quality they don't match up. However, I still reckon three singles from the last album, *Cha,* is a bit heavy compared to only two from 79's *Screaming Targets* and one from the *Dexterity* mini-album.

Maybe someone will just happen to bring a 24-track to one of the March Falcon reunion gigs — like Joe says during the intro to *King Of Fools* (on the live *Let's Drip A While),* "We're going to try this one more time, 'cos if I can get a great live version of this, I'll be laughing my head off. . ."

GREG TAYLOR

Blonde Haire Goes Black

Black And Blue

Written and performed by Mary Haire

Directed by Peter Kingston

Stables Theatre, Kings Cross

Friday and Saturday nights at 11 until 11th February; Sundays at 8.15

Dyed blonde MARY HAIRE does black BESSIE SMITH so well you forget that the difference is more than skin-deep. With a stark catwalk and bar set, decorated only by the pianist (Grant Ovenden) and the narrator (Peter Hardy), Mary somehow makes an easy transition from white to black without any help from Pancake Negro.

Of course, when Bessie was starting out in the variety shows of 1920, "we had to put on black makeup so the folks wouldn't know we were coloured." Colour is the reiterant theme of the show, because Bessie Smith made it to the big-time despite the fact she was so black that even *Black Swan* ("the only *genuine* coloured label") thought she looked and sounded *too black.* They liked *brown* girls.

Over two decades, Bessie notched up 180 recordings and 10,000,000 sales, and influenced Billie Holliday, Louis Armstrong and Janis Joplin. She was also one of the originators of the sort of raunchy humour that Mae West and Sophie Tucker took to extremes. Bessie was big and boozy, consumed men and women with equal ferocity and when hard-up, would drag off her pianist. . . and he was gay. Sounds like a terror? She was. Who else would tell a bunch of Klu Klux Klanners to "pick up them sheets and *run!*"?

***Black And Blue* works between songs and narration. Quick-changing her way through eras, Mary gets into the stuff the Jazz Age was made of, right up to Bessie's death in 1937. "Jazz music intoxicates like whisky and releases animal passions," said a prohibition wowser. "Hallelujah!" yells Bessie, and goes to a Pigsfeet Party where the "funk is *flyin"* — where she gets knifed in the side and sings, "I want a pig's foot and a bottle of beer. . . slam me, 'cause I just don't care. . .", and still makes it to the matinee next day.**

Mary works hard at it; hers is not a silky blues, but wrenched from gut-level, and even her vibrato has a raspy edge to it. Husky overtones slide off her words as she sings *'T'aint nobody's business (If I do)'.* She bop dances in a thigh-slapping *Cakewalk,* looking as subtle as a train-crash in red satin dress and white feathers. Mary's strong and breezy with a powerhouse smile to match her voice.

But is there life after Jazz Age? Bessie's on bottom-billing and going down fast, boozing secretly in bar toilets while her family and friends suck it all away from her. *'Nobody knows you when you're down and out'. . .*well, it had to be done.

For thirty-odd years, Bessie's grave was unmarked until Janis Joplin bought her a headstone. Janis wrote a song about it, which Jeannie Lewis liked and gave to Mary Haire — who finishes the show with it.

Well-written, absorbing and pacey, *Black And Blue* doesn't rely on jazz purists or fans of Bessie's draped over the bench seats in the cosy midnight ambience. *Anyone* can go. Gives you something to talk about over your daily cappuccino.

ADELE BARNETT

FLIXFLIXFLIXFLIX

Sandy Dennis, Cher, Karen Black

COME BACK TO THE FIVE AND DIME JIMMY DEAN, JIMMY DEAN

Directed by Robert Altman

Starring Sandy Dennis, Cher, Karen Black

(Dendy, Sydney)

If you go for nostalgic oneupmanship, you'd doubtless be the sort who attends class reunions every few years just to compare social ranking with the next chestbeater. Look how far we've come. . .

More often everyone's got a dark secret to withhold, and this is precisely the sort of tender reflective tissue probed by *Come Back To The Five & Dime. . .* Sparse, emotive direction by Robert *(M.A.S.H./Nashville)* Altman, tightly claustrophobic camera angles and fraughtly charged dialogue elevate the single-set, one-act play feel into a multi-sided battle of acting wits.

Adapted for the screen from Ed Graczyk's Broadway production of the same name, the film centres on small-town, little theatre interplay among the three central characters, all cast as members of a James Dean fan club who reunite after twenty years. There are unresolved conflicts to be aired, myths to be deflated and interim (surprise!) revelations made. Time shifts are frequent and barely disguised, represented cleverly (though hardly with innovation) by means of the mirror wall in the dime store set.

Each of the all-female cast has her delusions. Mona (the ever-pale and ever-quivering Sandy Dennis) lives the lie of believing herself the quasi-virginal mother of James Dean's only son. "I was chosen by Him," she proclaims undaunted to the near and bitter end, and the irony's not lost on surveying the set. Amid the richly authentic interior of the dime store scene, there hang two gaudy neon shrines — one for James, one for Jesus. The tacky humour is an incisive comment unto its own, for *Come Back* explores the hypocrisy of "total" devotion. Tack as in sharp.

True to her name, Mona's got a bitch on everything. She's a classic hypochondriac (asthmatic), and fair game for the brassy taunts of Sissy (Cher), also still a waitress at the Five And Dime and waiting for a lover who's never coming back. She pays out on her own insecurity through Mona, and firmly believes her chest is her passport to happiness — fulfilment through mammoplasty.

Into their two-way turmoil strides Joanne (Karen Black), who's got it on both of them. They don't recognise her at first, and the reason why is the key to unfurling emotional chaos.

It's village idiot/Iscariot mentality blown out of all sense of proportion — similar to what may have transpired had Tennesee Williams written *Myra Breckinridge.* The sort of class reunion a social ranker would be a fool to miss. . .

PHIL STAFFORD

RAM STAFF

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ALL CORRESPONDENCE
7th Floor,
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Phone: 29 6271 (A.H. 29 6274)
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VILE ASPERSIONS — *ANSWERS*

1. c
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. c
6. d
7. b
8. b
9. b
10. d
11. c
12. b
13. c
14. d
15. d
16. c (Ava Gardner of Frank Sinatra on the eve of his marriage to Mia Farrow.)
17. d
18. a
19. c
20. c
21. b
22. b
23. a
24. b
25. c
26. a
27. b
28. d
29. d (Clara Bow reportedly slept with the football team of the University of South Carolina. She even touched down with the team's reserve, a young buck by the unlikely name of Marion Morrison, perhaps better known as 'John Wayne').
30. d
31. d
32. d
33. b
34. a
35. a
36. f

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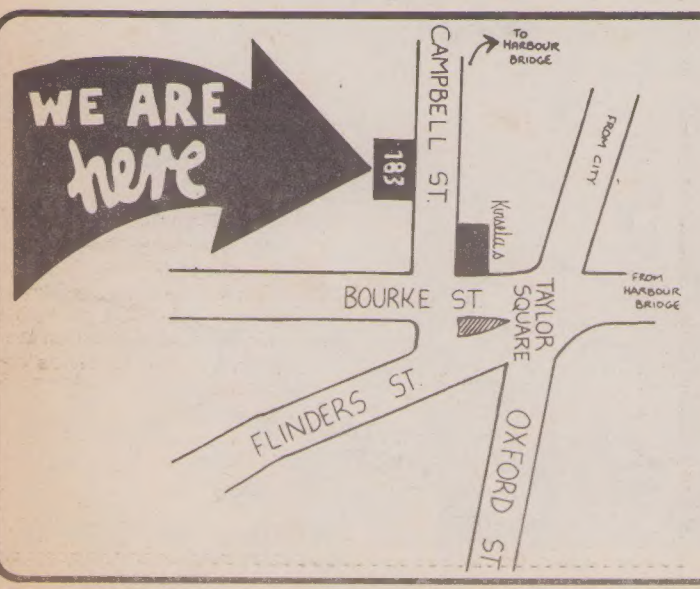

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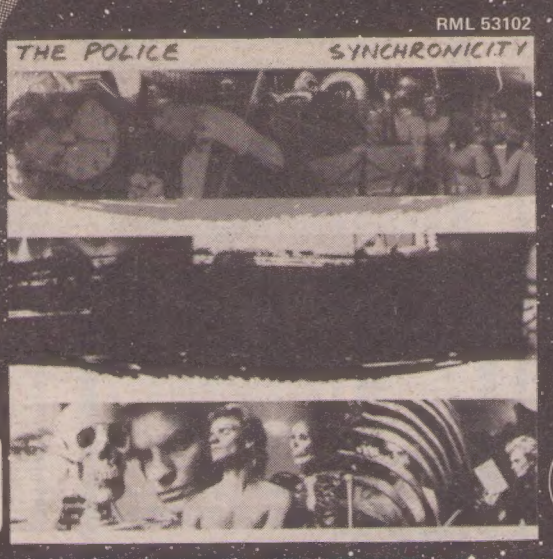

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